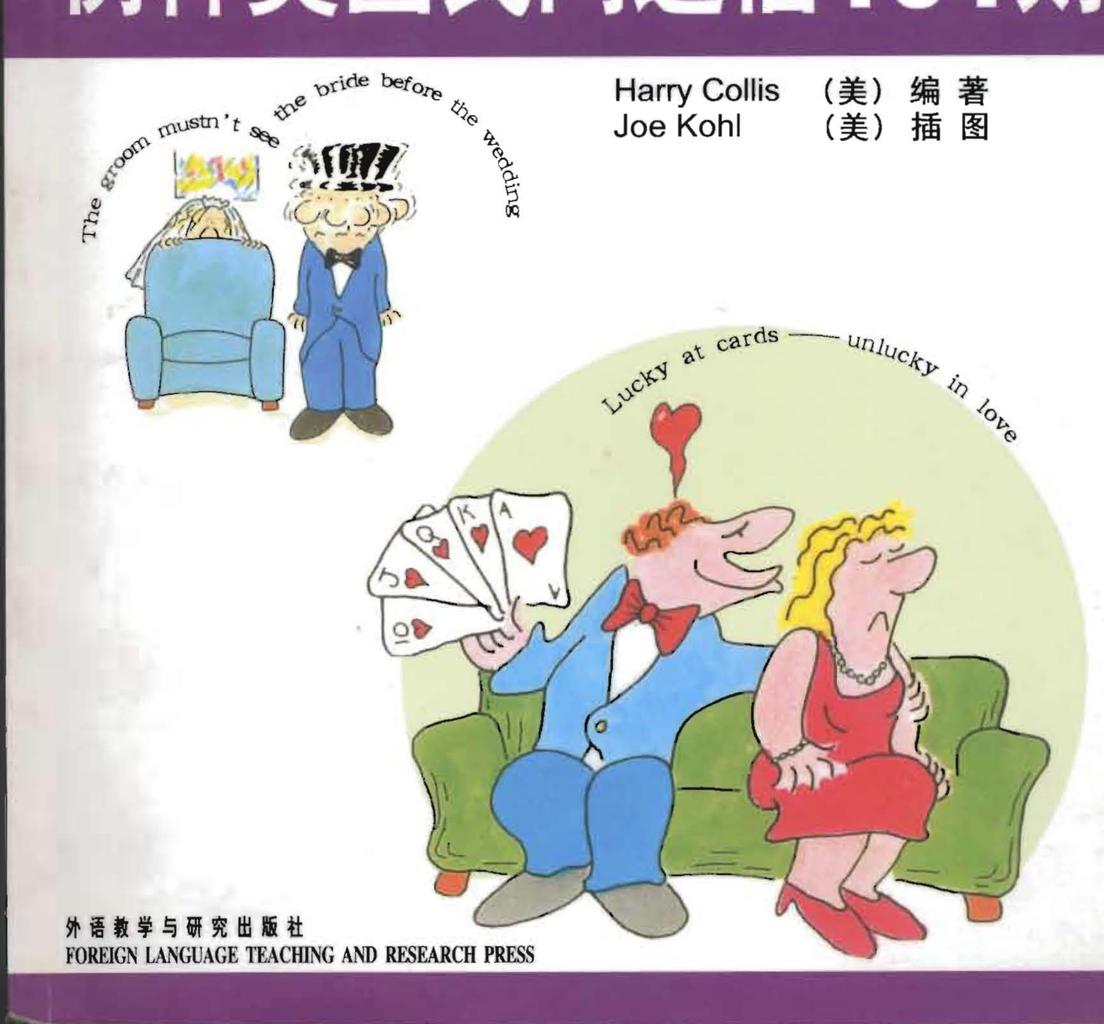
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101 American Superstitions

例释美国民间迷信101则

Harry Collis （美）编著
Joe Kohl （美）插图



外语教学与研究出版社
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又为什么会争“许愿骨”？

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写在前面

过去，对未知事物的恐惧引发了人们对不可见的鬼怪神灵的迷信，人们发明出种种吉祥物或符咒，希望它们给自己带来好运，或是驱散厄运。尽管民间的迷信观念都是些无稽之谈，但它们始终是英语语言和文化的一个组成部分。《例释美国民间迷信101则》旨在通过剖析某些美国民间迷信，帮助你更好地了解美国社会和风土人情。

本书按主题分为9篇——“身体语言”、“爱情与婚姻”、“食物的宜与忌”、“数字面面观”、“千万小心！”、“好运多多”、“事关胜负”、“特殊日子”、“其他”。

本书在解释每则美国迷信时，不仅配有中英文讲解，让你读得通透；还有绝妙的漫画，让你笑得痛快；此外更有生活实景举例，给你全英文情境的真实体验——当然，你也会在及时出现的方括号里，找到你需要的帮助。

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Section One

Body Language

第一篇 身体语言

1 If you sing before seven, you will cry before eleven



乐得太早必生悲

There's an old belief that the morning is too early to be happy. Happiness has to be earned each day — otherwise, you are sure to have bad luck.

很久以前，就有人认为切不可在清晨过早地表现出快乐的情绪。快乐应该在一天中慢慢获得，否则你肯定要倒霉。

A: (singing) Oh, what a beautiful morning!
B: Do you really want that new job?
A: Of course I do!
B: Then you'd better prepare for the interview instead of being happy so early.

2 Asking God's blessing for a sneezer



保佑打喷嚏者

People once believed the soul could escape from the body when a person sneezed. To stop this from happening, people ask God to bless — and so to protect — the person who sneezes.

过去，人们认为当一个人打喷嚏时，他的灵魂会从身体中逃脱出去。为避免这种情况，人们就会祈求上帝保佑——以保护那个打喷嚏的人。

A: ah chu! (loud sneeze)

B: God bless you!

A: Thanks. I sure could use His blessing. I feel a cold coming on.

3 Stopping hiccups



止嗝忠告

It was once believed that a person with hiccups was possessed by the devil. Many remedies are supposed to stop hiccups, such as scaring the person or having the person hold his nose while drinking water.

过去，人们认为打嗝的人是被魔鬼缠住了。据说很多方法对止嗝有效，比如吓唬那个打嗝的人或是让他喝水时捏住鼻子。

Sally couldn't get her daughter to stop hiccuping. She tried to scare her by making a loud noise. When that didn't work she had her daughter take small drinks of water while holding her nose. At last, the hiccups stopped.

4 Cover your mouth when you yawn



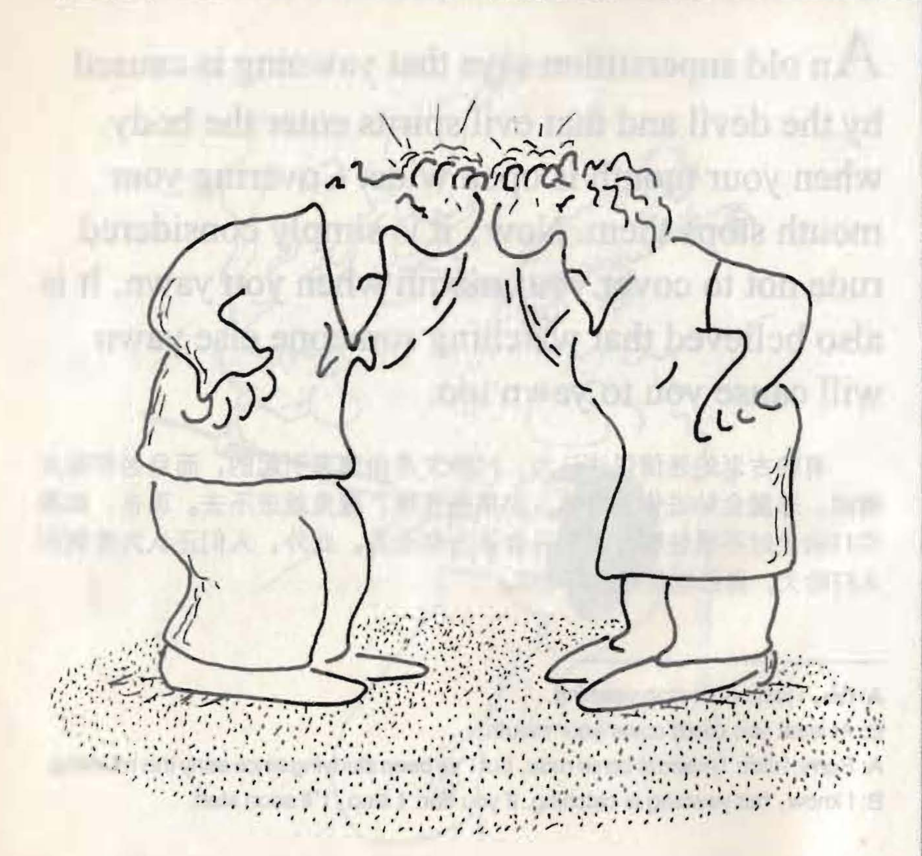
打哈欠时捂住嘴

An old superstition says that yawning is caused by the devil and that evil spirits enter the body when your mouth is open wide. Covering your mouth stops them. Now, it is simply considered rude not to cover your mouth when you yawn. It is also believed that watching someone else yawn will cause you to yawn too.

有种古老的迷信说法认为，打哈欠是由魔鬼引起的，而且当你张大嘴时，恶魔会钻进你的身体。如果捂住嘴，魔鬼就进不去。现在，如果你打哈欠时不捂住嘴，人们只会认为你无礼。此外，人们还认为看到别人打哈欠，自己也会开始打哈欠。

A: Oh, I just can't stop yawning.
B: At least you could cover your mouth!
A: Sorry. I didn't mean to be so rude, but I've been studying since early this morning.
B: I know, but yawning is catching. If you don't stop, I'll soon start.

5 An itchy nose predicts a quarrel



鼻子痒预示争吵

There are many superstitions about itching. For example, an itchy nose means you're going to have a quarrel with someone.

对于身上某个部位发痒，人们有很多迷信说法。比如，鼻子发痒意味着你将会和某人吵架。

A: I'll see you later.

B: Where are you going? You just got here.

A: Yeah, and in the five minutes I've been here you've scratched your nose a dozen times. I'm in no mood for a quarrel. Just kidding. I'll have a meeting in twenty minutes. Bye.

6 Spitting on your hands for strength



唾手掌获取力量

Seeing animals licking their wounds caused people to believe that saliva had some magical healing power. Even today the first thing someone does when they hurt their finger is put it in their mouth. Nowadays, when we spit on our hands, we are asking for added strength.

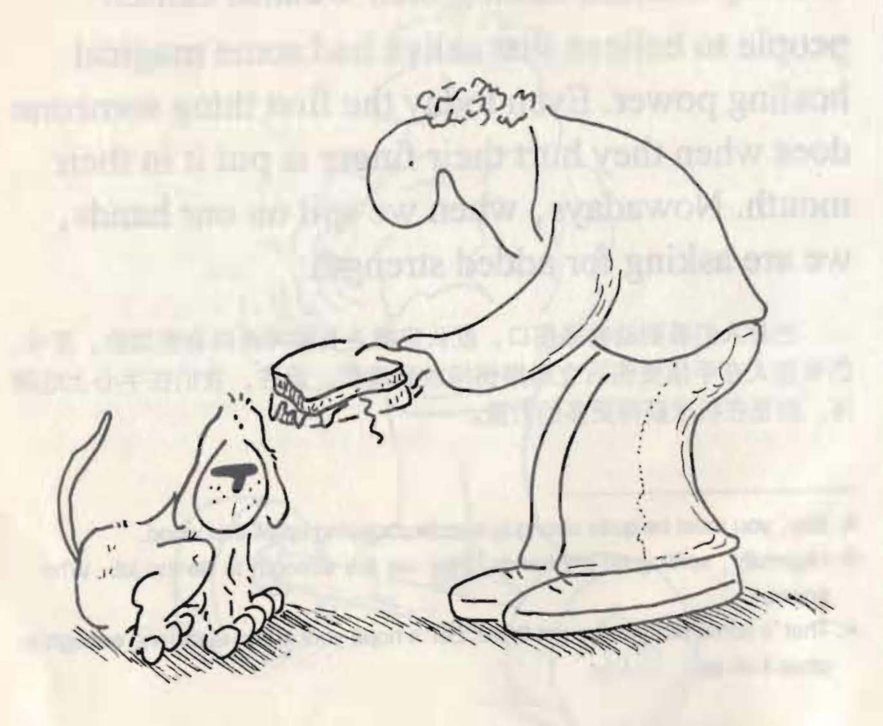
古时人们看到动物舔伤口，就认定唾液有种神奇的治愈功效。至今，仍有些人在手指受伤后立刻把伤指放到嘴里。现在，我们往手心上吐唾沫，则是在祈求获得更多的力量。

A: Boy, you must be quite strong to handle chopping up all that wood.

B: Hopefully, spitting on my hands gives me the strength to do the job. Who knows?

A: That's some pile you've got there. Let's hope your saliva lasts long enough to chop it all up.

7 Getting rid of a cough



止咳怪方

People have tried many strange remedies to get rid of a cough. One cure is to take a hair from the coughing person's head, put it between two slices of buttered bread, feed it to a dog, and say, "Eat well you hound. May you be sick and I be sound."

为了摆脱咳嗽的烦恼，人们尝试过很多奇怪的疗法。其中一个方法是从咳嗽的人头上取下一根头发，夹在两片抹了黄油的面包中间，喂给狗吃，一边喂一边说："狗儿狗儿吃得香，愿你生病我健康。"

A: You've been coughing all night. Have you taken any medicine?
B: Yes, I've tried all kinds of medicines. Nothing worked.
A: I know what to do. I'll find a dog. You get some bread and butter.
B: You and your ridiculous [*foolish*] cures! Frankly, I'd prefer something hot to drink.

8 Curing cramps



治绞痛怪方

Superstition says that one way to stop the pain of a cramp is by carrying certain animal bones on your body. Another cure is to lay your shoes on your stomach, across the cramp.

迷信观念认为在身上放一些动物骨头可止住绞痛。还有一种方法是把鞋放在腹部，压在疼痛的部位上。

Little Johnny had stomach cramps after eating too many cookies and sweets at the party. Johnny's mother tried an old cure her grandmother had used. When his father came home, Johnny was lying in bed — with his shoes on his stomach! Of course, his stomache still hurt.

9 Cross your fingers to make a wish come true



手指交叉，梦想成真

It is said that bad luck is trapped at the point where the two fingers meet. So when we cross our fingers, we stop the bad luck from escaping and allow our wishes to come true.

据说两根手指交叉的地方可以锁住坏运气。因此手指交叉可以避免坏运气跑出来作祟，这样我们的愿望才会得以实现。

A: Congratulations! I heard that you got that job in the department store.

B: Not yet, but I hope to hear soon.

A: Well, I'll keep my fingers crossed for you.

B: Thanks. I need all the good luck I can get.

10 Whistling brings misfortune



不祥的口哨

People used to think that whistling was the noise made by evil spirits and that it invited misfortune. Whistling was considered very unlucky in a closed place such as a house or a ship. It was considered especially unlucky, for example, to whistle in a theater dressing room.

过去人们认为口哨是魔鬼弄出的声响，因而会招致不幸。人们普遍认为，在房间或船舱这样的封闭空间里吹口哨很不吉利。比如，在剧院更衣室里吹口哨是极为不祥的。

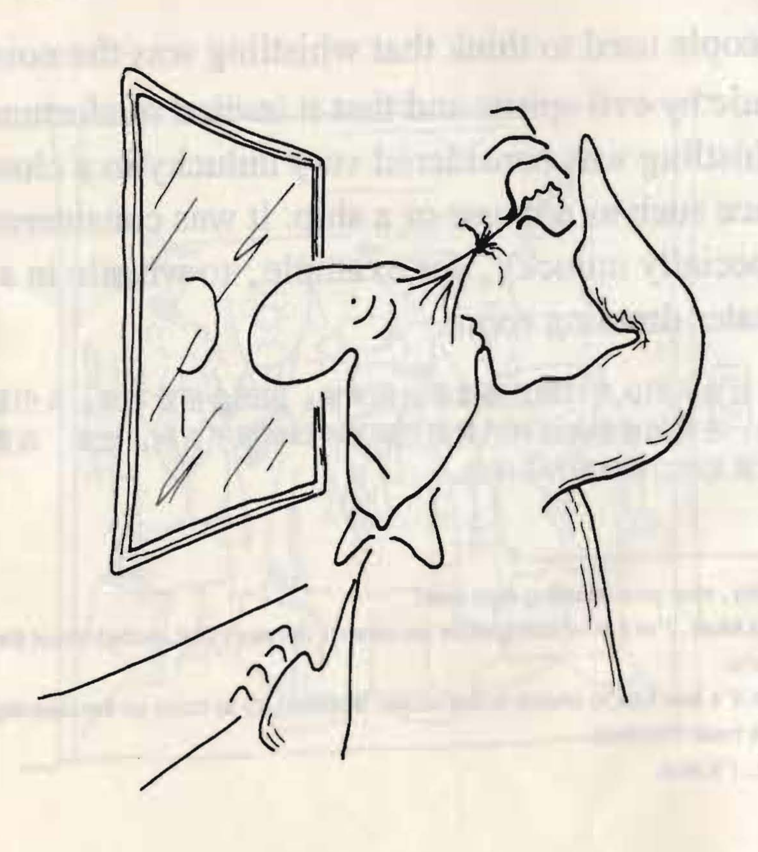
A: Mary, stop your whistling right now!

B: But Mom, I'm just whistling while we clean. I'm happy and excited about the party.

A: But it's bad luck to whistle in the house. Besides, try to focus on the cleaning. We have little time.

B: Ok, I'll stop.

11 Pulling out a gray hair will cause more to grow



揪一根，长十根

People have always thought that hair had magical powers, and there are many superstitions about human hair. One belief is that pulling out a single gray or white hair will cause ten more to grow in its place.

人们一直认为头发具有魔力。关于人类的头发，有很多迷信说法。有一种说法认为，拔掉一根灰头发或白头发，就会在原来的地方多长出十根同样的头发。

John got angry every time he looked in the mirror and saw a new gray hair. But he was afraid to pull out even one, though he didn't believe that if he did, he would grow even more gray. Actually, he didn't want to be bald yet.

12 Fingernail clippings must not be left for others to find



剪下的指甲别乱丢

An old American belief says that fingernails can be used to cast spells on their owner. The clippings must never be left around for the evil spirits to find. To be safe they should be burned or buried.

美国人有种古老的迷信观念，认为指甲可被用来对其主人施以诅咒。因此剪下的指甲切不可随意丢弃，以免被魔鬼发现。为安全起见，应把它们烧掉或埋起来。

A: I can't believe all the things that have gone wrong since I broke up with my girlfriend. I lost my car keys, my TV was stolen, and I have a terrible cold.

B: Maybe she put a spell on you to get even.

A: How could she do that?

B: Well, you know how she hated to find your fingernail clippings on the floor. Maybe she used them to call out the evil spirits.

A: Don't be foolish, I think I should take a couple of days off and gather myself together.

13 The evil eye



恶毒眼光

There is an ancient belief that some people have the power to harm another's health or happiness simply by looking at them. To protect yourself from being noticed by the evil eye, you must not openly praise yourself or call attention to any good fortune.

古时人们认为，某些人身上有种魔力，他们仅仅通过注视别人就能够伤害到别人的健康或破坏他们的幸福。要想不被恶毒的眼光注意到，千万不可当众夸耀自己或让人觉察到你的好运。

A: Hey, I got 100 on my test! That's the highest score in the whole school. Now I get to go to the next competition, and my teacher says I have a good chance to win.

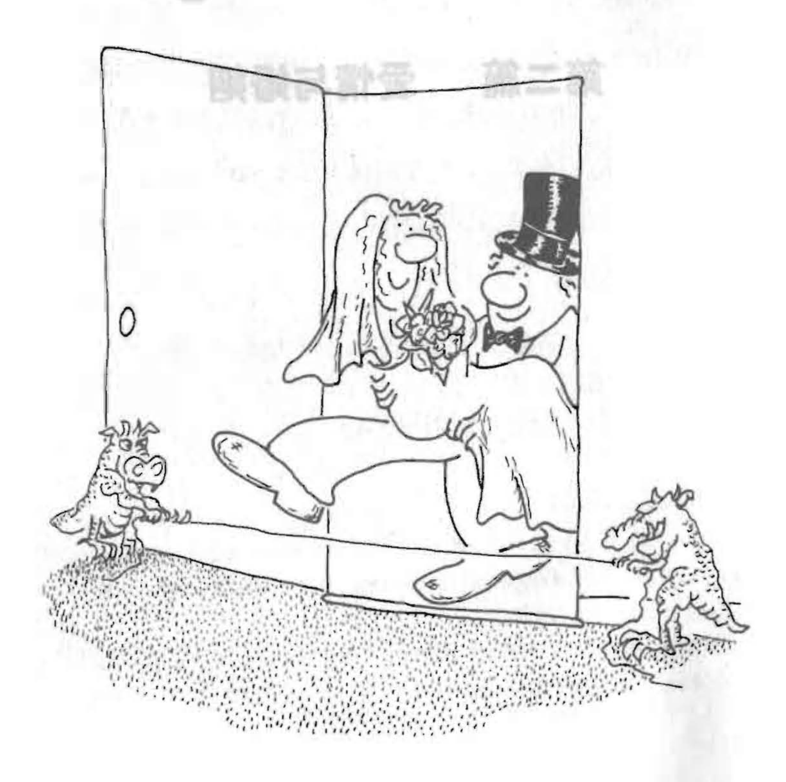
B: Not so loud, or you'll end up losing if the evil eye notices your good fortune. Just kidding. But hard work and keeping cool will certainly do you good.

Section Two

Love and Marriage

第二篇　爱情与婚姻

14 Carrying the bride across the threshold



抱新娘过门槛

The custom of the groom carrying his bride over the threshold is believed to bring the couple good fortune. One superstition says that evil spirits trying to spoil the newlyweds' happiness might cause the bride to fall as she enters her new home, so the groom should carry her to keep her from falling.

据说，新郎抱新娘过门槛这一习俗会给夫妻俩带来好运。有迷信观念认为，暗中破坏新婚夫妇幸福的魔鬼会在新娘走进新居的一刻让她摔倒。为避免新娘摔倒，新郎应抱新娘进门。

A couple had just come back from their honeymoon, and the husband was eager to surprise his bride with the new stereo equipment that he had purchased [*bought*] for their apartment. So he picked her up and told her to close her eyes as he carried her across the threshold. He hoped she would be pleased when she saw the compact discs of her favorite music as well.

15 Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue



旧的，新的，借来的，蓝色的

When getting married, brides traditionally wear or carry something old, something new, something borrowed, and something blue. "Something old" can be anything that has brought good luck to its owner in the past. "Something new" is a symbol of hope for the future. "Something borrowed" adds the good luck of the giver to the bride. And blue, considered a lucky color, is a traditional protection for all women.

结婚的时候，新娘按照传统应该穿上或随身携带一样旧的东西，一样新的东西，一样借来的东西，还有一样蓝色的东西。"旧的"可以是任何过去曾给主人带来好运的东西。"新的"象征着未来的希望。"借来的"可以把借出者的好运带给新娘。至于"蓝色"则被认为是一种吉利的颜色，自古以来就是女人的吉祥色。

A: Anna, the ceremony is about to begin. Are you ready?

B: Yes. I'm wearing my grandmother's necklace (old) and my beautiful wedding gown (new). Dad's lucky penny (borrowed) is tied into my bouquet with a blue ribbon (blue). Everything is perfect.

16 Cutting the wedding cake



切结婚蛋糕

The wedding cake has always stood for good fortune and fertility. The bride, with the help of her groom, must cut the first piece as a sign that they will share all possessions in the future.

结婚蛋糕始终象征着幸福美满，儿女满堂。新娘必须在新郎的帮助下切下第一块蛋糕，这标志着他们在未来的生活中将共享一切财产。

A: That wedding cake looks delicious, and I'm hungry. Let's go get some.

B: Don't you go near that cake! You know we must wait for the bride and groom to cut the first piece for themselves. It's tradition.

17 Choosing the wedding date



择婚礼吉日

The Romans believed that Juno, their goddess of women, blessed marriages that took place in her month. So June is considered the perfect month for marriage.

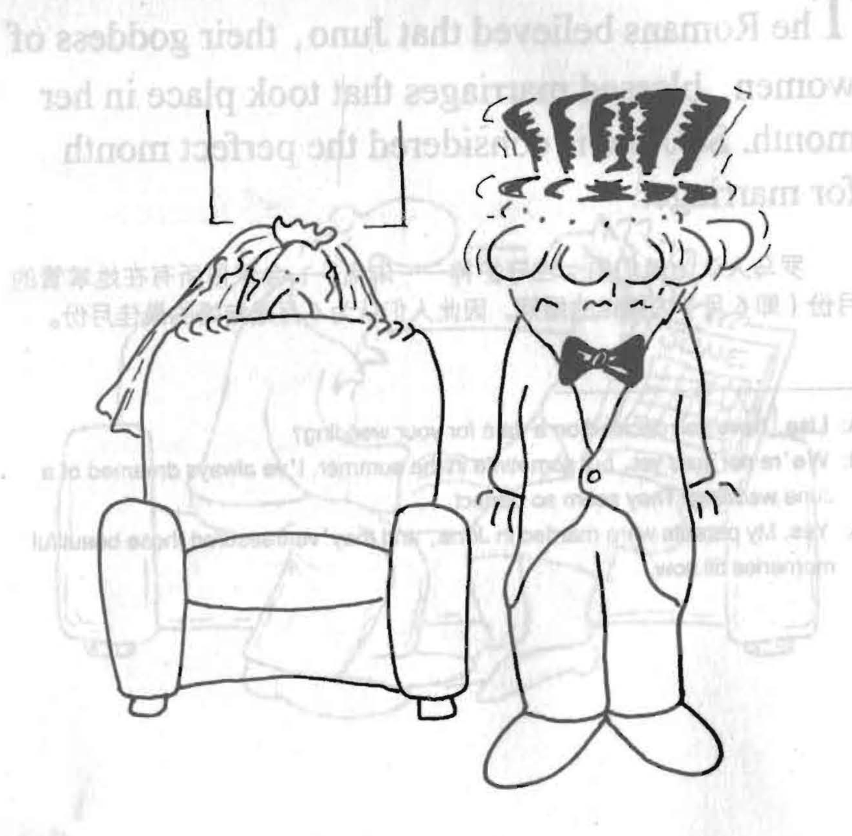
罗马人认为他们的女性守护神——朱诺——会保佑所有在她掌管的月份（即 6 月）内缔结的婚姻。因此人们认为 6 月是结婚的最佳月份。

A: Lisa, have you decided on a date for your wedding?

B: We're not sure yet, but sometime in the summer. I've always dreamed of a June wedding. They seem so perfect.

A: Yes. My parents were married in June, and they've treasured those beautiful momeries till now.

18 The groom must not see the bride before the wedding



婚礼前回避

Among the many superstitions concerning the wedding ceremony is the custom that the groom must not see his bride before the wedding ceremony. To do so would be a sign of submission to her family.

在有关婚礼的众多迷信说法中，有一项习俗是婚礼之前新郎不能见新娘。如果两人见面则标志着男方将听命于女方家庭。

A: Hey, Phil. I saw Marilyn as she was entering the church. She looks beautiful.

B: I'm sure she is. Her sisters wouldn't let me anywhere near her today.

A: Well, you don't want to spoil anything. And you don't have to wait much longer. The music has just started.

19 Throwing the bridal bouquet



新娘抛花束

The bridal bouquet has traditionally been a symbol of fertility. Throwing the bouquet is a modern addition to the wedding ceremony that says the woman who catches it will be the next one to marry.

在传统上，新娘花束是儿女满堂的象征。抛花束是现代婚礼新增添的一个仪式，据说接到花束的女子将是下一个结婚的人。

A: Now Jessica is the only one of our school friends who isn't married.

B: Yes, but I heard she and Tom are talking about marriage.

A: That's great. I hope she can catch the bride's bouquet, and there may be another wedding ahead.

20 Wearing a veil



戴面纱

The wedding veil is a reminder of the bridal canopy that was built to keep the evil eye from the wedding celebration. Raising the veil is a symbol of the daughter's freedom from her parents' control.

新娘面纱让人想到过去为避免“恶毒眼光”破坏婚礼而为新娘搭建的遮篷。掀起面纱象征着新娘从此脱离父母的控制。

The bride looked so small and young with the lace veil covering her face. But when the groom lifted it to kiss his bride, we saw a woman ready to build a new life with her husband.

21 Wearing a wedding ring



戴婚戒

In earlier times a wife was considered a possession, and the wedding ring was a sign that she had been purchased by the groom. The giving of the ring sealed the agreement.

从前，妻子被视为丈夫的财产，婚戒是新娘已被新郎占有的标志物。赠予婚戒即表示确定了婚姻契约。

A: Have you picked out your wedding ring yet?

B: We've decided on mine, but we haven't found the right one for Bill.

A: I thought only the woman wore a ring.

B: What an old-fashioned idea! Bill isn't buying me. Rings mean that we give ourselves to each other.

22 Throwing rice



抛洒大米

Throwing rice at newlyweds was traditionally a way to wish them many children. In places where rice was the basic food, couples needed many children to grow and harvest it. Nowadays, throwing rice at the bride and groom is a way to wish them a happy marriage.

往新婚夫妇身上抛洒大米在传统上是祝愿他们多子多福的一种习俗。在以大米为食的地方，一个家庭需要有很多子女来种植和收获稻米。如今，向新郎新娘身上抛洒大米已变为祝愿他们婚姻幸福的一种方式。

When Stephanie and Paul left the church, their guests followed them out and began throwing rice. Stephanie knew that the guests were simply wishing them a happy marriage, but her mother hoped the wishes also meant many grandchildren.

23 The honeymoon is over



蜜月过后

The word honeymoon comes from the custom that newlyweds were to drink mead and honey for the first thirty days after their marriage as the moon went through all of its phases. After those thirty days the couple's love was believed to wane, like the moon.

从前，新婚夫妇在婚后头 30 天里每天都要喝蜂蜜酒和蜂蜜，与此同时月亮也经历了各种月相，"蜜月"一词就源于这一习俗。这 30 天过后，据说夫妻俩的爱情就像月亮一样开始由盈转亏了。

A: Hello, John. Nice to have you back at the office. How was the honeymoon?

B: Wonderful. And Sara and I had a really relaxing time on the beach. But now we have to get back to work and responsibilities.

A: Yes, I guess the honeymoon is over.

B: Well, not completely!

24 Protectors of the wedding couple



新郎新娘的保护者

The bridesmaids and ushers once dressed like the bride and groom to trick evil spirits so that they would not know who was getting married. Later, the job of the ushers was to stand watch during the honeymoon. Nowadays, bridesmaids and ushers are simply friends who help the bride and groom during the wedding celebration.

从前，男女傧相在婚礼上要穿跟新郎、新娘相似的衣服，以迷惑魔鬼，让他们弄不清谁要结婚。后来，男傧相负责在蜜月中守护新婚夫妇。而现在，男女傧相只是在婚礼过程中给新郎和新娘帮忙的朋友。

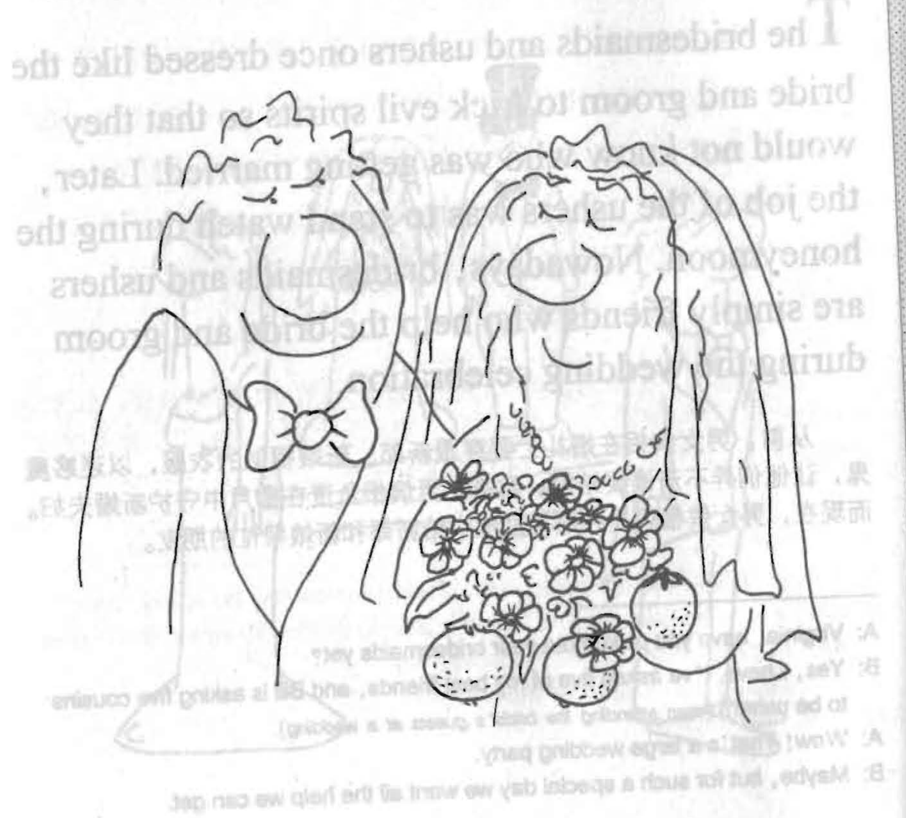
A: Virginia, have you picked out your bridesmaids yet?

B: Yes, I have. I've asked five of my best friends, and Bill is asking five cousins to be ushers [*men attending the bride's guests at a wedding*].

A: Wow! That's a large wedding party.

B: Maybe, but for such a special day we want all the help we can get.

25 Orange blossoms for eternal love



橙花：永恒的爱

Orange blossoms are often found in the bridal bouquet. The orange blossom tree represents eternal love and so is a perfect symbol for a wedding.

新娘花束中常常可见白色的橙花。橙树代表着永恒的爱，因此是婚姻的最佳象征。

A: Silvia, have you chosen the flowers for your bridal bouquet?

B: Not completely, but I know I want to use orange blossoms. They are so beautiful and smell so wonderful.

A: For sure. And they always make me think of lovers.

26 Wearing a white wedding gown



穿白色婚纱

As far back as the Greeks, the white gown was a symbol of joy. Now a white wedding dress is more a symbol of purity than of joy.

早在古希腊时代，白色礼服就是快乐的象征。而现在，白色婚纱在更大程度象征纯洁，而不是快乐。

Now that Marie was getting married, she did not need to go searching for the perfect gown. She decided to wear the same white gown her mother had worn as a young bride.

27 The wedding kiss



婚礼之吻

The wedding kiss is the sign of the holy pledge between the bride and groom. According to tradition, it is lucky for the bride to cry at this point in the ceremony. If she does not, there will be tears throughout the marriage.

婚礼上的亲吻标志着新郎新娘间的神圣誓约。根据传统，新娘在这一刻流泪将给他们带来好运。如果新娘没有流泪，那么他们的婚姻自始至终都将充满泪水。

A: What a wonderful wedding!

B: They look so happy. Did you notice that when they faced the guests after their kiss, both the bride and groom had tears in their eyes and big smiles on their faces?

A: Yes, their marriage is off to a good start.

28 Tying old shoes to the newlyweds' car



喜车上拴旧鞋

This custom began in a time when the father of the bride gave her old shoes to the groom as a symbol that he was now responsible for her care.

从前结婚时，新娘的父亲把新娘穿过的旧鞋送给新郎，表示从此把女儿托付给新郎照顾。在喜车上拴旧鞋这一习俗就源于那个时候。

A: What a racket [*noise*] the couple's car made when they drove away!

B: It's no wonder with all those tin cans tied to the rear fender. But what were those old shoes doing there?

A: Maybe someone thought they'd come in handy if the car ran out of gas.

Section Three

Food for Thought

第三篇　食物的宜与忌

29 Eat apples for good health



吃苹果保健康

Apples have long been connected to superstitions about health, love, and death. Nowadays, a common belief is that the apple will bring good health to the person who eats it. A well-known American saying is "An apple a day keeps the doctor away."

苹果一直跟健康、爱情、死亡等方面的迷信观念联系在一起。现在，人们普遍认为吃苹果会给人带来健康。有一句广为人知的美国俗语就这样说：一天一苹果，疾病远离我！

A: Mom, these apples are really good! This is the second one I've had today.

B: I'm glad you like them. It's better to spend money on healthy food than on a visit to the doctor.

30 Saying "bread and butter" to avoid separation



不想分手，就说"面包黄油"

Superstition has it this way: bread that has been buttered can never be unbuttered. So when two people walking together are parted by something, they say "bread and butter" to be sure nothing separates their friendship.

有一种迷信说法是这样的：已经抹在面包上的黄油就再也不能被去掉了。因此，当两个走在一起的人因某事而分开时，他们就会说"面包黄油"，以确保他们的友谊不会被任何事物拆散。

Pam and Jill were walking home from school together, just as they did every day. As they came to the mailbox on the corner, Pam moved to the left and Jill to the right. Both girls laughed and said, "Bread and butter."

31 Never leave an eggshell unbroken



莫留整蛋壳

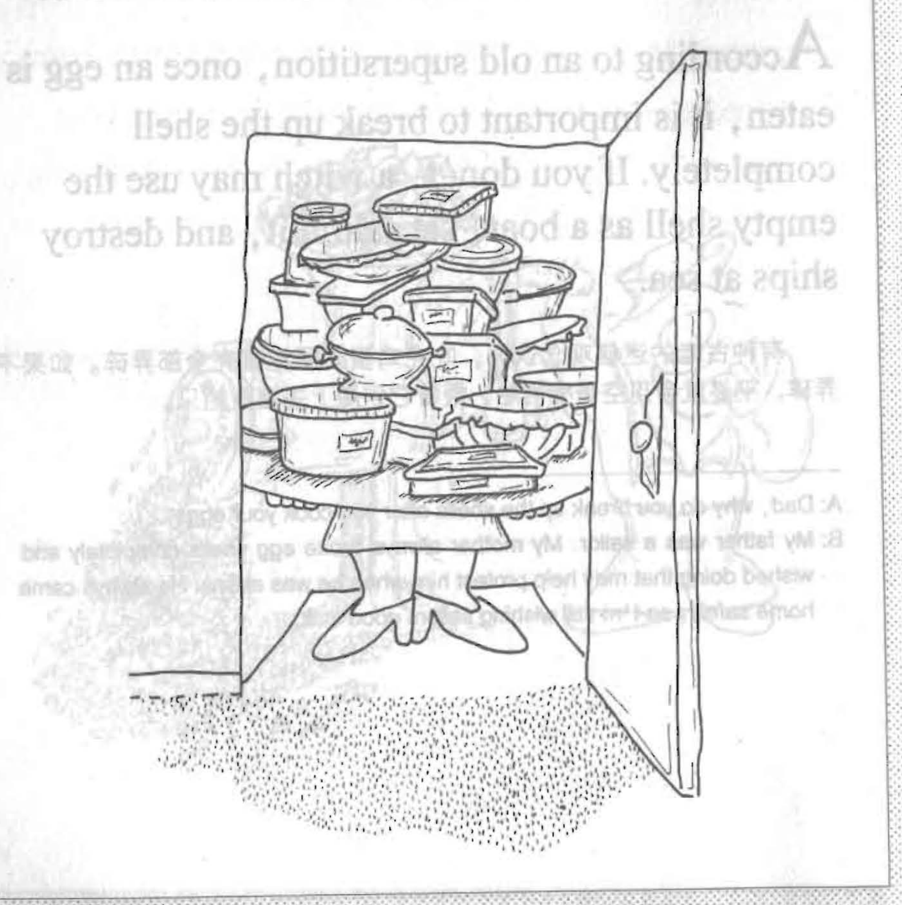
According to an old superstition, once an egg is eaten, it is important to break up the shell completely. If you don't, a witch may use the empty shell as a boat, set sail in it, and destroy ships at sea.

有种古老的迷信观念认为，吃完鸡蛋必须把蛋壳全部弄碎。如果不弄碎，巫婆就会用空蛋壳当船，乘着它到海上去摧毁船只。

A: Dad, why do you break up the shells after you cook your eggs?

B: My father was a sailor. My mother always broke egg shells completely and wished doing that may help protect him when he was at sea. He always came home safely, so I'm still wishing sailors good luck.

32 Do not return an empty food container



送回的餐具不能空

If one is given a gift of food, the container it came in must not be returned empty. To return it empty would bring hunger to the house of the giver or the receiver.

如果有人送你某种食品作礼物，盛食品的餐具千万不能空着送回去。如果空着，那么馈赠者或接受者中就有一家会遭受饥饿。

A: Tommy, will you take this plate of cookies to Jim's house for me?
B: Why are you sending cookies to them?
A: Jim's mother sent that plate filled with candy to my birthday party. I can't send it back empty.

33 Do not throw away unwanted bread



不要了的面包别扔掉

Since bread is a basic food of most people, superstition says that it is wrong to throw away unwanted bread. Those who do will go hungry.

由于面包是大多数人的主要食物，迷信观念认为扔掉不要了的面包是错误的。谁如果这样做了，就要挨饿。

A: Beth, you can't throw that bread in the trash.

B: Why not? It's too stale [*not fresh*] to eat.

A: OK, but don't throw it away. Let's put it outside for the birds.

34 Taking the last piece of food



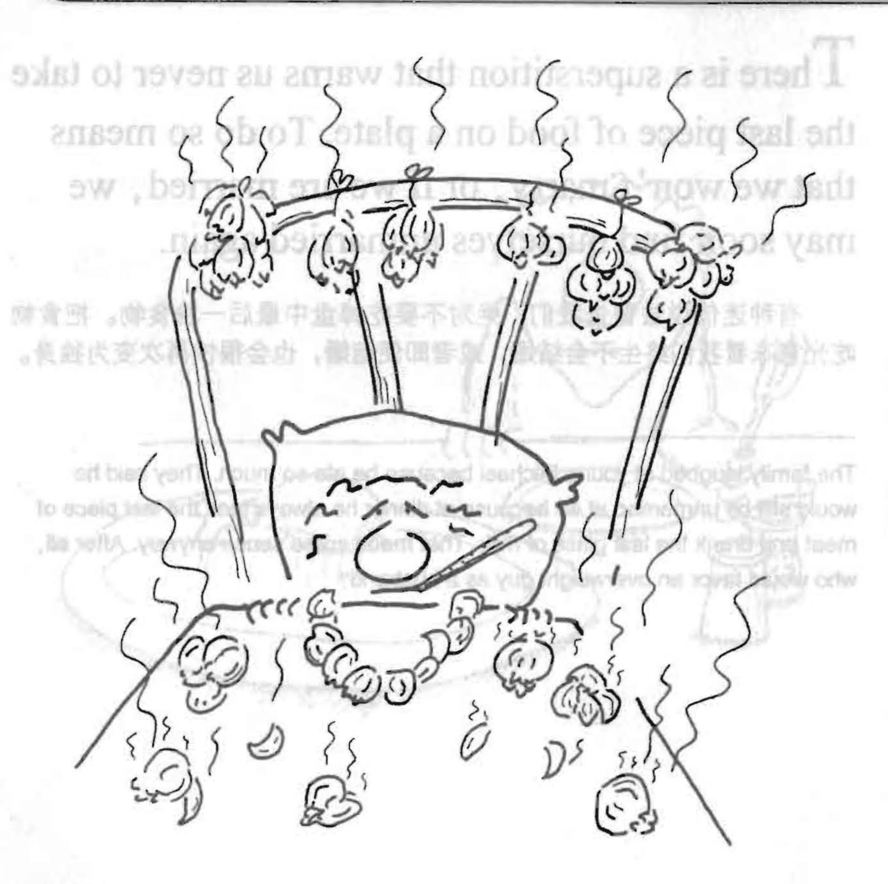
最后一块食物不要吃

There is a superstition that warns us never to take the last piece of food on a plate. To do so means that we won't marry, or if we are married, we may soon find ourselves unmarried again.

有种迷信说法警告我们，绝对不要吃掉盘中最后一块食物。把食物吃光意味着我们终生不会结婚，或者即便结婚，也会很快再次变为独身。

The family laughed at young Michael because he ate so much. They said he would still be unmarried at 40 because at dinner he always took the last piece of meat and drank the last glass of milk. That made some sense anyway. After all, who would favor an overweight guy as a husband?

35 Cure all ills with garlic



蒜治百病

People have long believed in the healing powers of garlic. It was often hung in a home to help a sick person get well. It was also worn around a healthy person's neck to protect against illness.

人们一直相信蒜有治病的功效。生病的人家常会在室内悬挂蒜，以使病人尽快康复。健康的人有时也会把蒜挂在脖子上，以防生病。

A: What is that terrible smell?

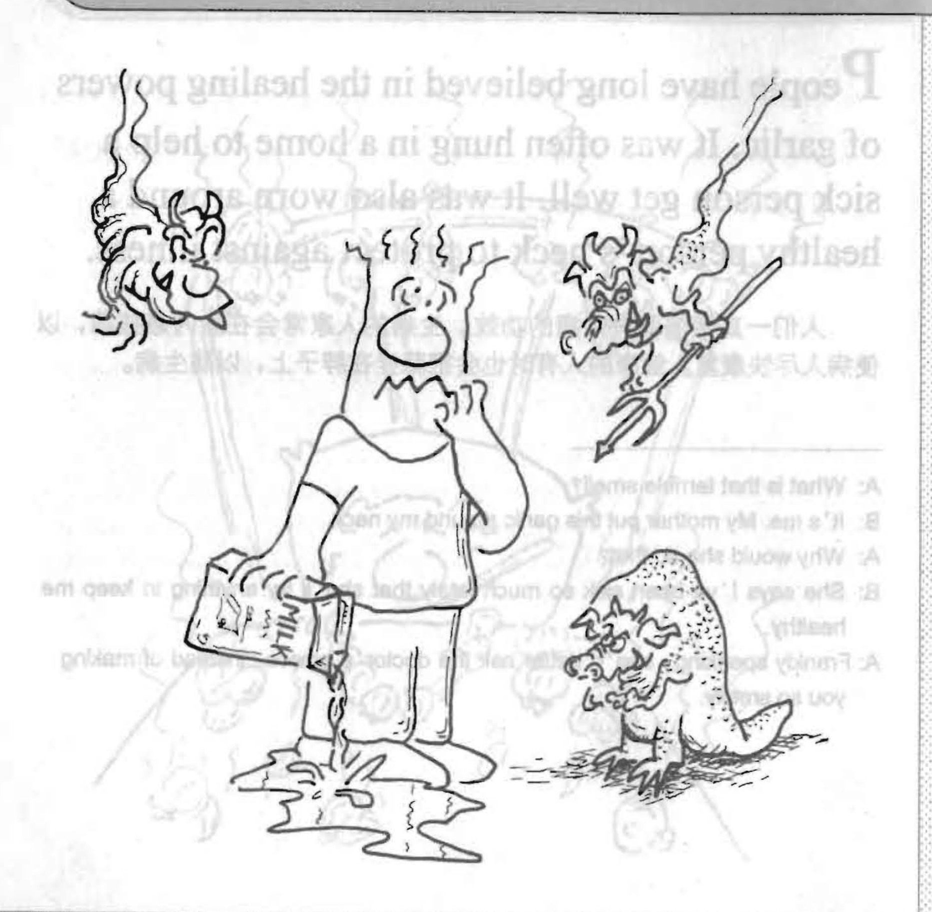
B: It's me. My mother put this garlic around my neck.

A: Why would she do that?

B: She says I've been sick so much lately that she'll try anything to keep me healthy.

A: Frankly speaking, she'd better ask the doctor's advice, instead of making you so smelly.

36 Spilt milk



打翻牛奶

Superstition says that spilling milk will bring seven days of bad luck because spirits will come to any house where they can find milk on the floor.

有种迷信观念认为打翻牛奶会让人倒霉 7 天，因为只要魔鬼发现谁家地上有牛奶，就会找上门去。

A: This week has been terrible. My dog ran away, my bike broke, and my girlfriend dumped me.

B: Sure, you've had some bad luck. But did you think about why?

A: Because on Monday morning I spilled a big glass of milk on the kitchen floor.

B: Nonsense. let me give you a hint. You never care about anything or anybody except yourself. That's why they left you.

37 Throwing salt over the left shoulder



向左肩后撒盐

Because humans and animals need salt for life, spilling salt was considered a serious misfortune and a sign that evil spirits were trying to take away the household's salt. To avoid them, you should throw a pinch of salt over your left shoulder because that is the side where the spirits live.

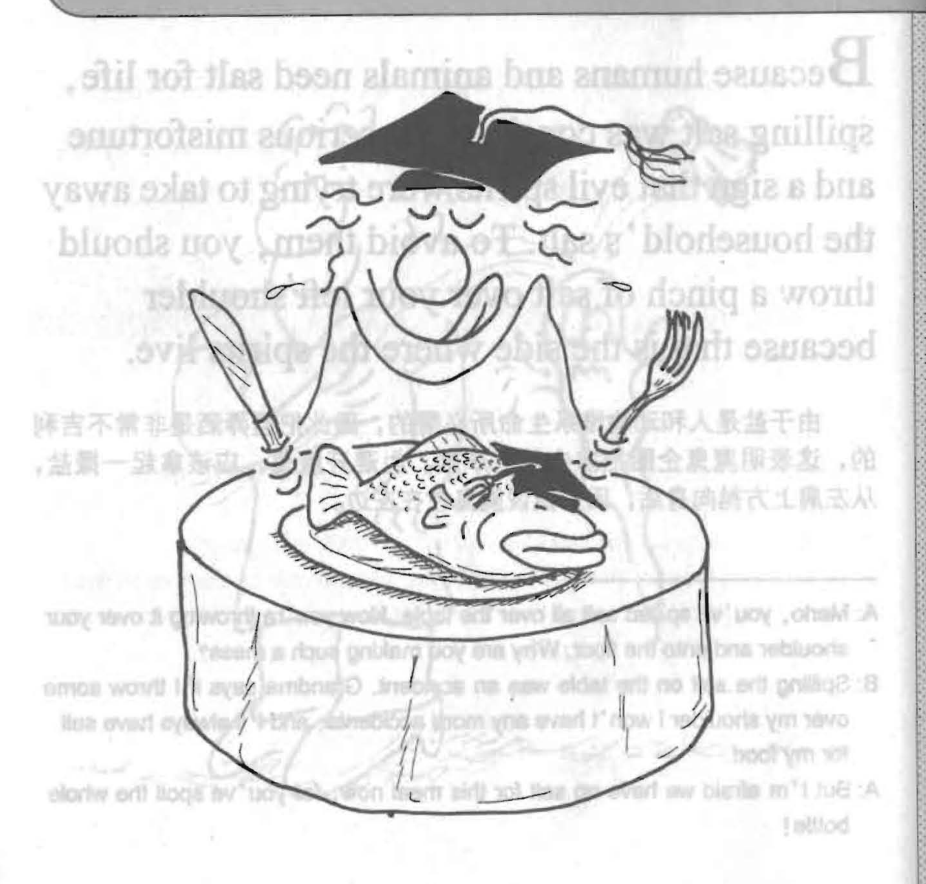
由于盐是人和动物维系生命所必需的，因此把盐弄洒是非常不吉利的，这表明魔鬼企图把家中的盐拿走。为避开魔鬼，应该拿起一撮盐，从左肩上方抛向身后，因为据说魔鬼住在左边。

A: Mario, you've spilled salt all over the table. Now you're throwing it over your shoulder and onto the floor. Why are you making such a mess?

B: Spilling the salt on the table was an accident. Grandma says if I throw some over my shoulder I won't have any more accidents, and I'll always have salt for my food.

A: But I'm afraid we have no salt for this meal now, for you've spoil the whole bottle!

38 Eat fish for brain food and good fortune



吃鱼——一利大脑，二图吉利

It is commonly believed that eating fish is good for the brain. For good luck, fish should be eaten from head to tail.

人们普遍认为，吃鱼对大脑有好处。为讨吉利，吃鱼应该从头吃到尾。

A: Let's have lunch before our test. We need to eat lots of fish.

B: I'm hungry, too, but I don't like fish.

A: You better eat it anyway — from head to tail. I've heard this math test is really hard, and our brains need all the help they can get.

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39 Pulling a wishbone

争“如愿骨”

The forked bone that lies between the neck and breast of a bird is called the wishbone. When two people pull the bone until it breaks, the one holding the larger piece is given a wish. For the wish to come true, it must be kept secret.

鸟的颈部和胸脯之前呈叉形的骨头被称为“如愿骨”。两人各执一端一起将其折断，得较大一端者将有机会实现一个愿望。为了如愿以偿，许愿者绝不能把愿望告诉别人。

A: Mom, Kevin isn't playing fair. He used two hands to pull on the wishbone.

B: But Sam is bigger than me. If I don't use two hands, he always wins. I want to wish for a puppy.

A: It won't matter. You told me your wish, so now it can't come true. Ok, if you behave yourself, maybe you will get one from Santa Claus.

40 Using pepper to get rid of an unwanted guest



胡椒送客

One tradition says that putting a little pepper under the chair of a guest will keep him from visiting too long.

有种传统观念认为，如果在客人椅子下面撒一些胡椒，就可以避免他在家中久留。

A: How much longer is your brother going to stay? He's been here two weeks already.

B: I know. I'm ready for him to leave, too, but I don't want to be rude. When he sits down for dinner, I'll put some pepper under his chair. Maybe he'll take the hint.

A: I only hope he'll notice it and know what that means.

41 Tea leaves tell the future



茶叶算命

Many people claim that they can tell the future by reading the patterns tea leaves make when the empty cup has been turned upside down onto a saucer.

杯中的茶喝完后，茶叶倒扣在茶碟上会呈现出一定的形状，许多人自称能通过这一形状预见到喝茶者的未来。

A: Have you heard the news? Larry is going to ask Anna to marry him.

B: That's great, but how do you know?

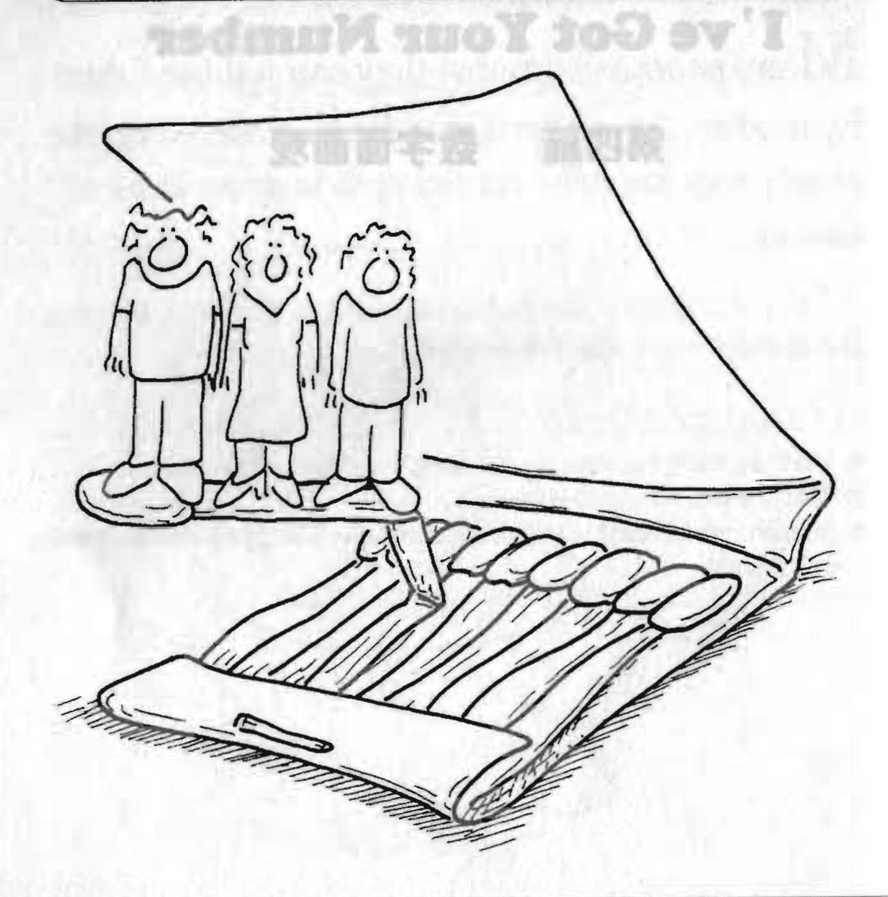
A: My grandmother read it in Anna's tea leaves. Just joking. I saw him buy the ring last Thursday.

Section Four

I've Got Your Number

第四篇　数字面面观

42 Three on a match



一根火柴三支烟

There is a superstition that warns us never to light three cigarettes with one match. The belief comes from soldiers who knew that the light of the match could show the enemy where they were.

迷信的人认为，切不可用同一根火柴连续点三支烟。这种迷信源于旧时的士兵。他们知道，点燃火柴就会向敌人暴露自己的位置。

Charles and his friends were standing outside the store smoking cigarettes. George asked Charles for a light, but Charles refused. "I already lit cigarettes for John and me. I don't mind lighting a third with this match, but it's burnt out."

43 All things come in threes



好事坏事都成三

Because it represents the traditional family— mother, father, and child — three is thought to be lucky. Gifts, letters, and visitors come in threes. But it is said that bad events — like accidents and funerals — come in threes as well.

由于“三”代表着传统的家庭构成——母亲、父亲和孩子，因此人们认为“三”是个吉利的数字。礼物、信件、客人都是成三出现。但是据说坏事，如意外事故、葬礼等，也是成三到来。

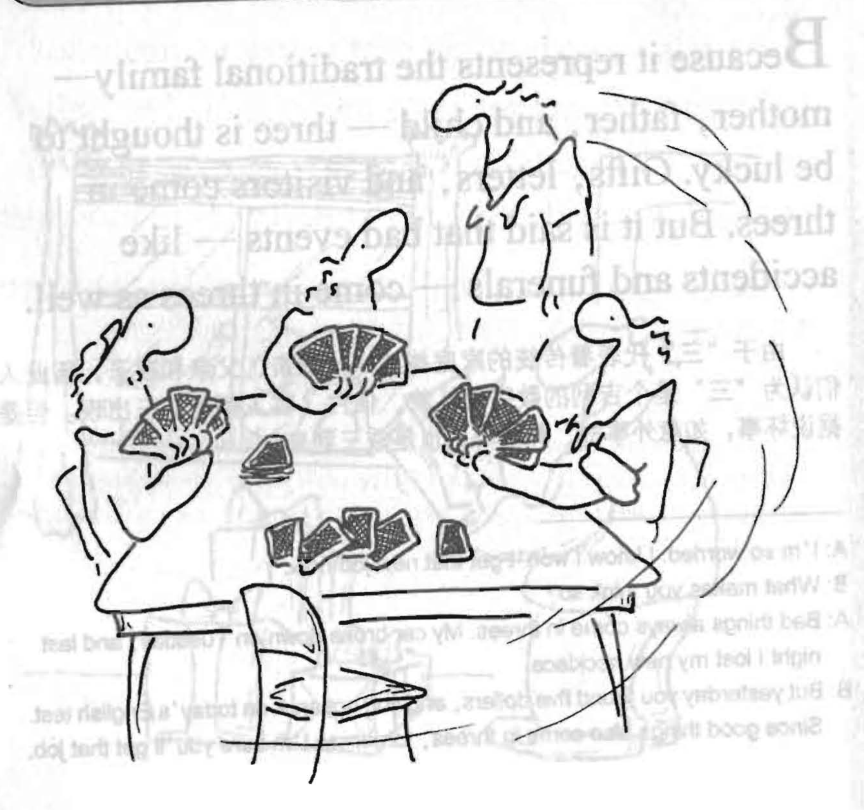
A: I'm so worried. I know I won't get that new job now.

B: What makes you think so?

A: Bad things always come in threes. My car broke down on Tuesday, and last night I lost my new necklace.

B: But yesterday you found five dollars, and you got an A on today's English test. Since good things also come in threes, tomorrow I'm sure you'll get that job.

44 Lucky three at the card table



牌桌上的吉利三

To change their luck when they are losing, some card players get up from their chairs and spin them around three times before sitting down again. Others walk around the table three times before beginning to play.

打牌时如果总输，有些输牌的人为了改变手气，会站起来把椅子转三圈，然后再坐下。还有人会在开始打牌之前绕桌子走三圈。

A: Stop walking in circles, Bob. Sit down and let's play cards.

B: Just a minute; I need to go around one more time. Last week when we played, I lost the whole night. This week I'll do whatever it takes to win, no matter it works or not.

45 If you're born on the first day of the month



1号出生的幸运儿

Many people believe that children born on the first day of the month will have good fortune throughout their lives. The number one is considered very lucky.

很多人都相信在一个月的第一天出生的孩子将终生拥有好运。数字"1"被认为是非常吉利的。

A: Goodness! What an active baby! He's so alert [*lively in action*].

B: Thanks, Judith. Bill and I play a lot of games with him.

A: How old is he?

B: He'll be one on August 1st.

A: He sure is lucky! Born on the first of the month to parents who think he's the most important person in the world!

46 A two-dollar bill



两美元的钞票

In the United States the two-dollar bill is considered unlucky since it is a reminder of the two or **deuce** in a deck of playing cards; "deuce" is an old name for the devil. To change the bad luck, the corner of the bill should be torn off.

在美国，人们认为两美元的钞票是不吉利的，因为它让人想到纸牌中的"2"或"deuce"，而"deuce"恰恰是魔鬼的旧称。为避免倒霉，应把钞票的一角撕掉。

A: Paul, can you lend me some money?

B: All I have is this two-dollar bill. Do you want it?

A: Sure. I'll tear the corner to be safe. Then maybe I'll get lucky and my paycheck will come early.

B: You'd better not, or this note won't be accepted when you want to buy something with it.

47 Cats have nine lives



猫有九条命

In ancient Egypt cats were believed to be like gods, and to kill a cat was a crime that could be punished by death. The modern belief that a cat has nine lives comes from this tradition.

在古埃及，猫被奉为神灵，杀死猫的罪行足以被判处死刑。现代人认为猫有九条命，就是受了古埃及传统的影响。

A: I believe our cat must be the luckiest animal in the world.

B: What makes you think so?

A: She's been hit by a car three times now and has never been hurt seriously.

B: But I doubt she can survive another six accidents.

48 The seven-year itch



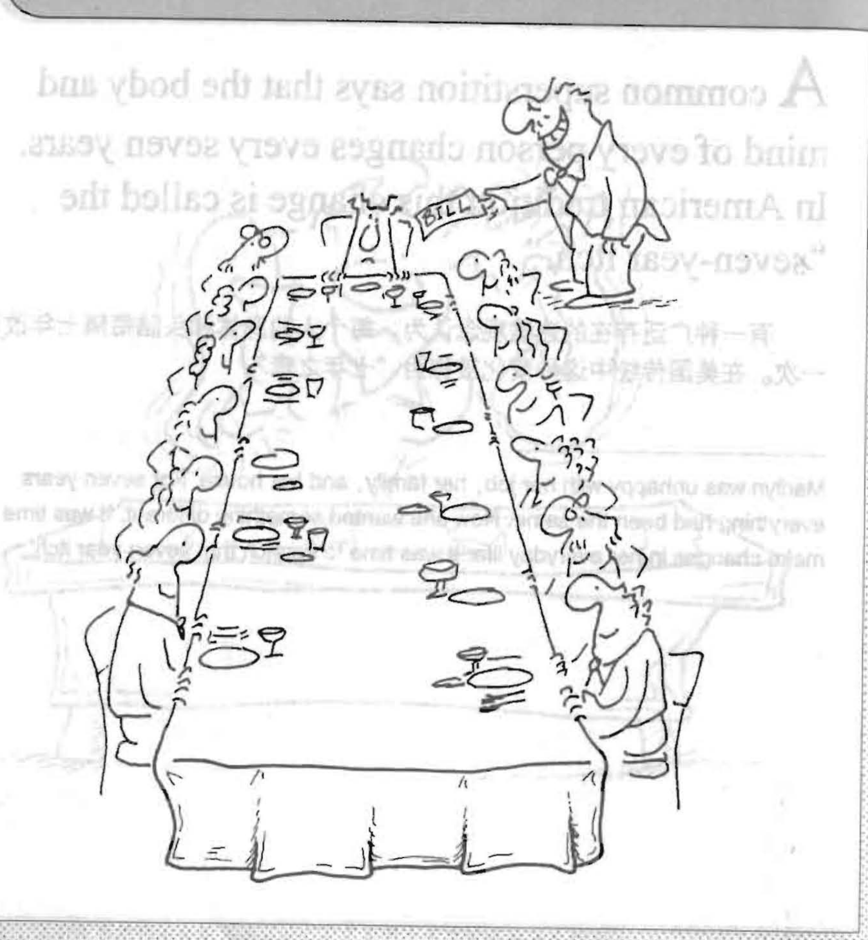
七年之痒

A common superstition says that the body and mind of every person changes every seven years. In American tradition this change is called the "seven-year itch."

有一种广泛存在的迷信观念认为，每个人的身体和头脑每隔七年改变一次。在美国传统中这种变化被称为"七年之痒"。

Marilyn was unhappy with her job, her family, and her house. For seven years everything had been the same. Now she wanted something different. It was time to make changes in her everyday life. It was time to scratch that seven-year itch.

49 Thirteen at a table



13人的宴席

Many traditions consider the number thirteen to be unlucky. One such superstition says that it is unlucky to be the thirteenth guest at a dinner table.

很多传统观念认为数字“13”不吉利。比如，有迷信认为当餐桌上第十三位客人是非常倒霉的事。

Jessica had invited sixteen people to her dinner party, but only thirteen were able to come. She was so afraid something would go wrong, however, to her relief, everything turned out nicely.

Section Five

Be Careful!

第五篇　千万小心！

50 Stepping on a crack



脚踩裂缝

An old saying goes, "Step on a crack; break your mother's back." A crack in the sidewalk represented the opening of a grave, and stepping on a crack meant inviting death to your family.

有俗语说：脚把裂缝踩，妈妈背折断。人行道上的裂缝，代表坟墓的开口，踩上裂缝意味着给家人带来死亡。

Six-year-old Mary walked slowly along the sidewalk, looking down at her feet.
"Hurry up, Mary," her father said. "What are you looking at?"
"I have to go slowly and watch for cracks. Sammy stepped on a crack, and now his mother's in the hospital. I don't want anything to happen to Mommy."
"You're really nice to care about mommy. But what Sammy did had nothing to do with his mother's illness. Don't be silly."

51 Walking under a ladder



梯子下面走

A ladder leaning against a wall forms a triangle with the wall and the earth. According to traditional belief, the three sides of the triangle represent the family, so passing through the triangle destroys the wholeness of the family. This belief is the root of the superstition that walking under a ladder brings bad luck.

斜靠在墙上的梯子与墙和地面之间构成一个三角形。根据传统观念，三角形的三边代表一家人。因此，穿过这个三角形就会破坏家庭的完整。在梯子下面走会带来不幸这种说法就源于此。

A: Stop! You're not going to walk under that ladder, are you?

B: Surely you don't believe that old superstition.

A: I do now. Last month I walked under a ladder, and two days later my sister took a new job and moved 300 miles away.

B: Don't be silly. You should feel happy for her.

52 A black cat crossing your path



黑猫面前过

People used to believe witches could change themselves into cats. A black cat crossing your path is bad luck because it might really be a witch.

从前，人们认为巫婆能把自己变成猫。人们认为黑猫从面前经过不吉利，就是因为担心它是巫婆变成的。

A: Pam, why are you crying?

B: I knew something terrible would happen when that black cat crossed in front of me on the way to school this morning. I just heard Michael asked Sara to go to the party instead of me.

A: Don't blame the cat. You are too arrogant with guys.

53 Breaking a mirror



打碎镜子

It was long believed that a person's reflection showed the soul and that to break the reflection was to harm the soul. So a person who breaks a mirror and damages the reflection it gives will have seven years' bad luck.

长久以来，人们都认为镜中的影像代表一个人的灵魂，打破这一影像即为伤害灵魂。因此，打碎镜子、破坏了影像的人将会有7年的坏运气。

A: What happened to that beautiful mirror you had hanging by the table?
B: I broke it when I was cleaning.
A: Oh, no! Seven years is a long time to have bad luck.
B: Don't be fussy. I'm not superstitious at all.

54 Putting a button in the wrong hole



系错扣子

According to tradition, incorrectly closing the buttons on your clothes will bring misfortune. The only way to protect yourself is to take off the clothes and start over again.

传统上认为，系错衣服纽扣会带来不幸。惟一的补救办法是脱下衣服，重新穿一遍。

A: I was in such a hurry to get to work this morning that I couldn't even button my shirt. I had to take it off and start over three times.

B: Why did you take it off?

A: Today I'm going to meet my new boss, and I want to be sure he likes me.

B: But I think if you were late, your boss would not like you no matter how smart you were dressed.

55 Destroying a spiderweb



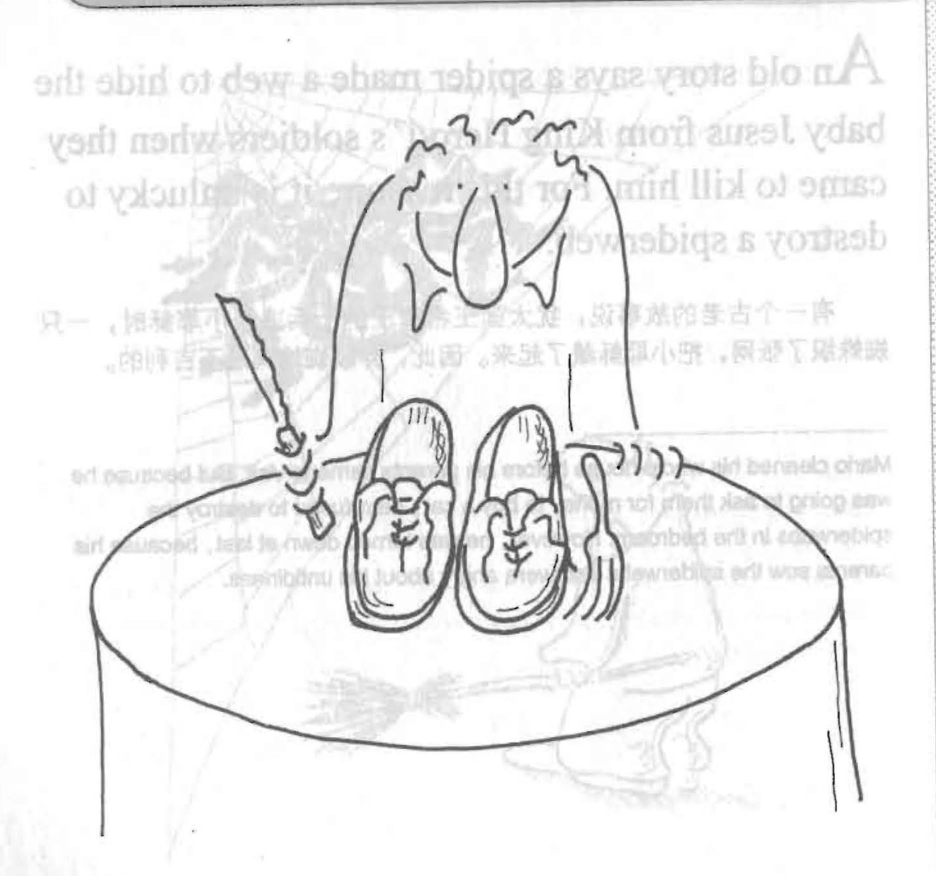
弄破蜘蛛网

An old story says a spider made a web to hide the baby Jesus from King Herod's soldiers when they came to kill him. For this reason, it is unlucky to destroy a spiderweb.

有一个古老的故事说，犹太国王希律王的士兵追杀小耶稣时，一只蜘蛛织了张网，把小耶稣藏了起来。因此，弄破蜘蛛网是不吉利的。

Mario cleaned his whole house before his parents came to visit. But because he was going to ask them for money to buy a car, he refused to destroy the spiderwebs in the bedroom. However, he was turned down at last, because his parents saw the spiderwebs and were angry about his untidiness.

56 Placing shoes on a table



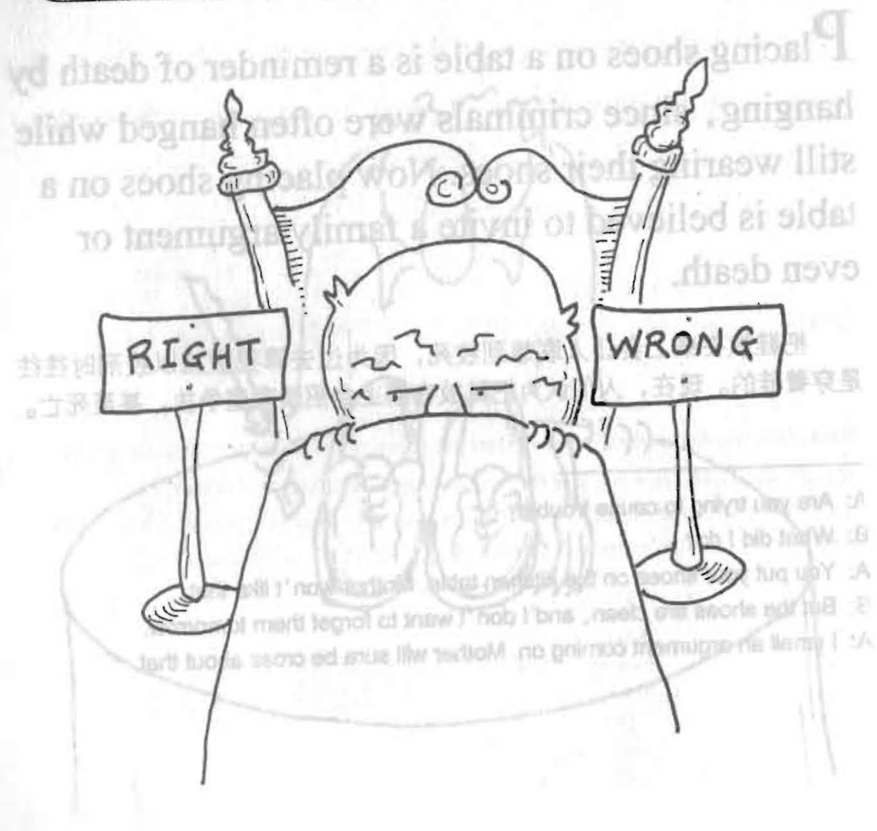
鞋子放在桌上

Placing shoes on a table is a reminder of death by hanging, since criminals were often hanged while still wearing their shoes. Now placing shoes on a table is believed to invite a family argument or even death.

把鞋放在桌上会让人联想到绞死，因为过去罪犯被施以绞刑时往往是穿着鞋的。现在，人们认为把鞋放在桌上会招致家庭争执，甚至死亡。

A: Are you trying to cause trouble?
B: What did I do?
A: You put your shoes on the kitchen table. Mother won't like that.
B: But the shoes are clean, and I don't want to forget them tomorrow.
A: I smell an argument coming on. Mother will sure be cross about that.

57 Getting up on the wrong side of the bed



从左边起床

Since most people are right-handed, starting from the right has always been considered better than starting from the left. We often say that a person who is quarrelsome must have gotten up on the wrong side — that is, the left side — of the bed.

由于大多数人惯用右手，传统上一直认为从右侧起床比从左侧起床好。遇上情绪恶劣的人，我们常会说，他那天一定是从错误的那边——即左边——起床的。

A: Don't give me any trouble. Just get ready to go.
B: OK. Just as soon as I've had a cup of coffee.
A: No! I want you to get ready now!
B: Wow, you must have gotten up on the wrong side of the bed this morning.
A: No, I only fell off from my bed.

58 Giving a knife as a gift



送刀作礼物

Because knives and scissors have sharp cutting edges, it's bad luck to give either as a gift to a friend. To prevent "cutting" the friendship between two people, the receiver should "buy" the knife or scissors with a small coin.

由于刀和剪子都有锋利的刃，因此送这两样东西给朋友作礼物是不吉利的。为避免刀或剪子"斩断"两个人间的友谊，收到礼物的人应该用一小枚硬币"买"下它。

Jim was excited when his friend Bob gave him a new hunting knife. But he was disappointed when Bob said he would no longer go hunting with him. "Maybe I should have paid him for the knife," Jim said.

59 Killing a spider



弄死蜘蛛

Tradition says that it is unlucky to kill a spider. This custom comes from the time when the population of flies, which carried sickness, was kept down only by spiders.

根据传统观念，弄死蜘蛛是不吉利的。这是因为过去只有蜘蛛才能灭掉苍蝇，使其不致泛滥，四处传播疾病。

A: I'm not going to visit my grandmother again until she moves to a new house.

B: Why not?

A: Because I hate spiders, and they are everywhere in her house. She won't let me kill them because she says it brings bad luck. So no more visits from me.

60 Opening an umbrella



室内打伞

Since the umbrella was first used to protect a person from the sun, it is an insult to the sun to open an umbrella indoors. To do so will bring bad luck to anyone who lives in the house.

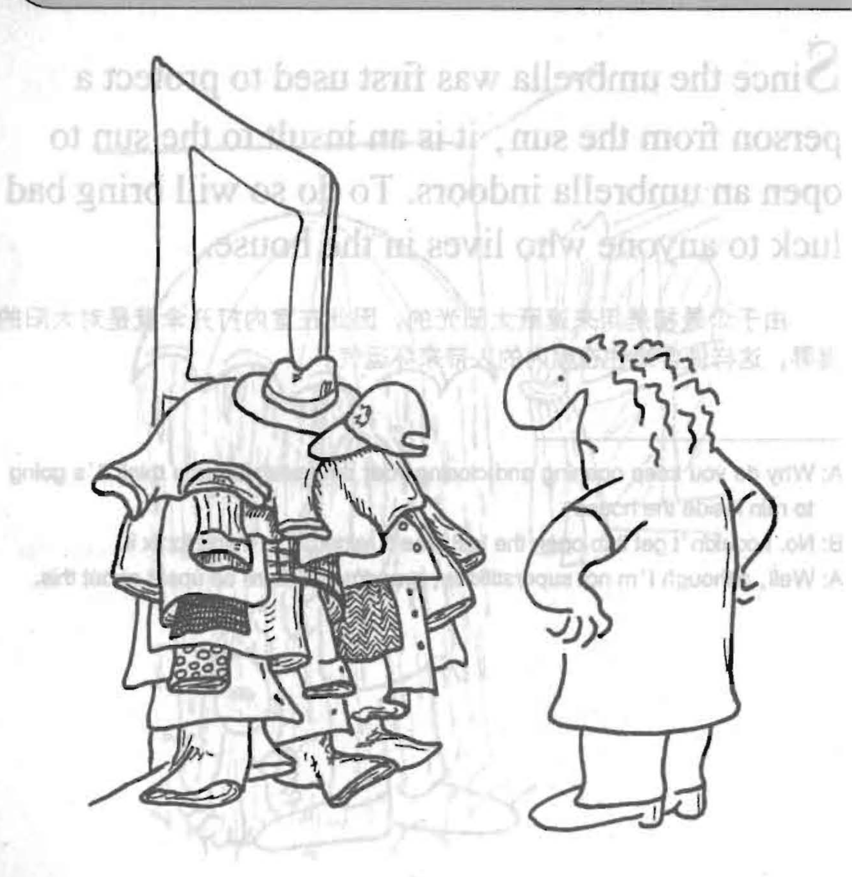
由于伞最初是用来遮蔽太阳光的，因此在室内打开伞就是对太阳的侮辱，这样做会给住在屋内的人带来坏运气。

A: Why do you keep opening and closing your umbrella? Do you think it's going to rain inside the house?

B: No. I couldn't get it to open the last time it rained. I'm trying to fix it.

A: Well, although I'm not superstitious, grandma will sure be upset about this.

61 Hanging clothes from a doorknob



门把手上挂衣服

An old custom was to hang clothes from a doorknob of a house or room as a sign that someone inside had died. When there has been no death, hanging clothes from a doorknob would invite misfortune.

过去有一种习俗：在房门或屋门把手上挂衣服，向人表示家中有人死去。如果没有人去世，在门把手上挂衣服就会招来不幸。

A: Please take your coat off the door and put it away.

B: But I always hang my coat on the doorknob.

A: Not today. I'm making dinner for my friends, and I want everything to be pleasant.

62 Stepping on a shadow



踩影子

It is believed that a shadow represents a person's soul. So any harm that comes to the shadow will also come to the person who makes it.

据说影子代表一个人的灵魂，因此伤害影子就会伤害到影子的主人。

Carlos was so angry after Beatriz won the game that he followed her home and threw rocks at her shadow. But she still beat him the next time they played.

Section Six

Lots of Luck

第六篇　好运多多

63 Finding a four-leaf clover



找到幸运草

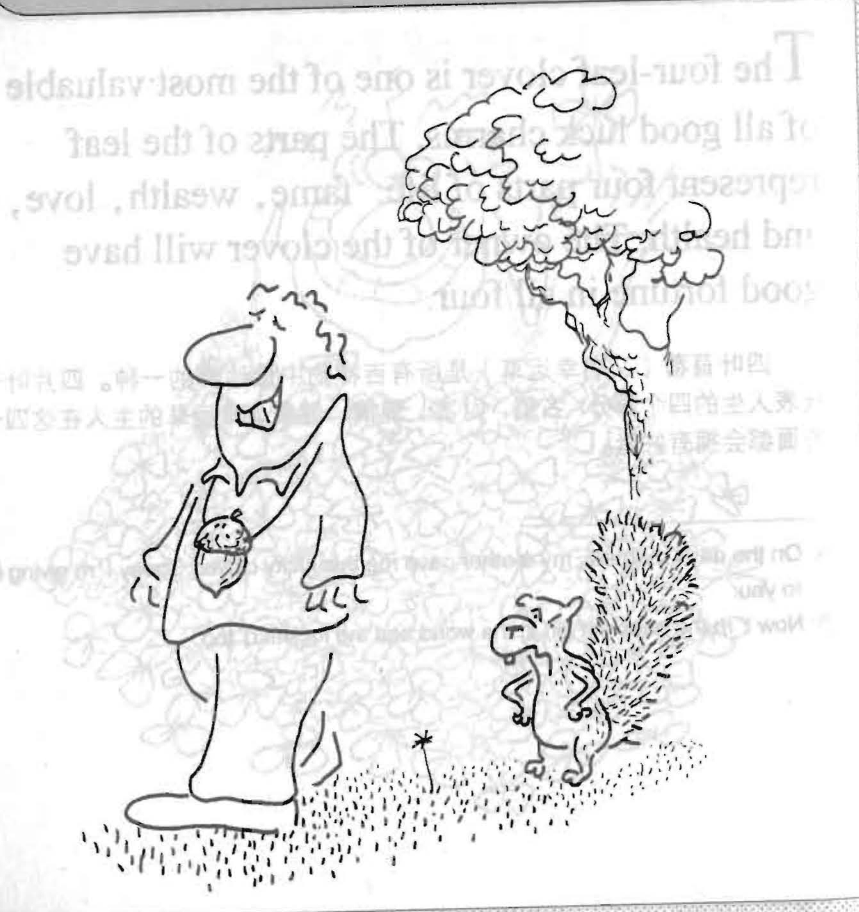
The four-leaf clover is one of the most valuable of all good luck charms. The parts of the leaf represent four parts of life: fame, wealth, love, and health. The owner of the clover will have good fortune in all four.

四叶苜蓿（又名幸运草）是所有吉祥物中最珍贵的一种。四片叶子代表人生的四个部分：名望、财富、爱情、健康。幸运草的主人在这四个方面都会拥有好运。

A: On the day I married, my mother gave me this lucky clover. Today I'm giving it to you.

B: Now I'm the happiest girl in the world and the luckiest, too.

64 Wearing an acorn



佩戴橡子

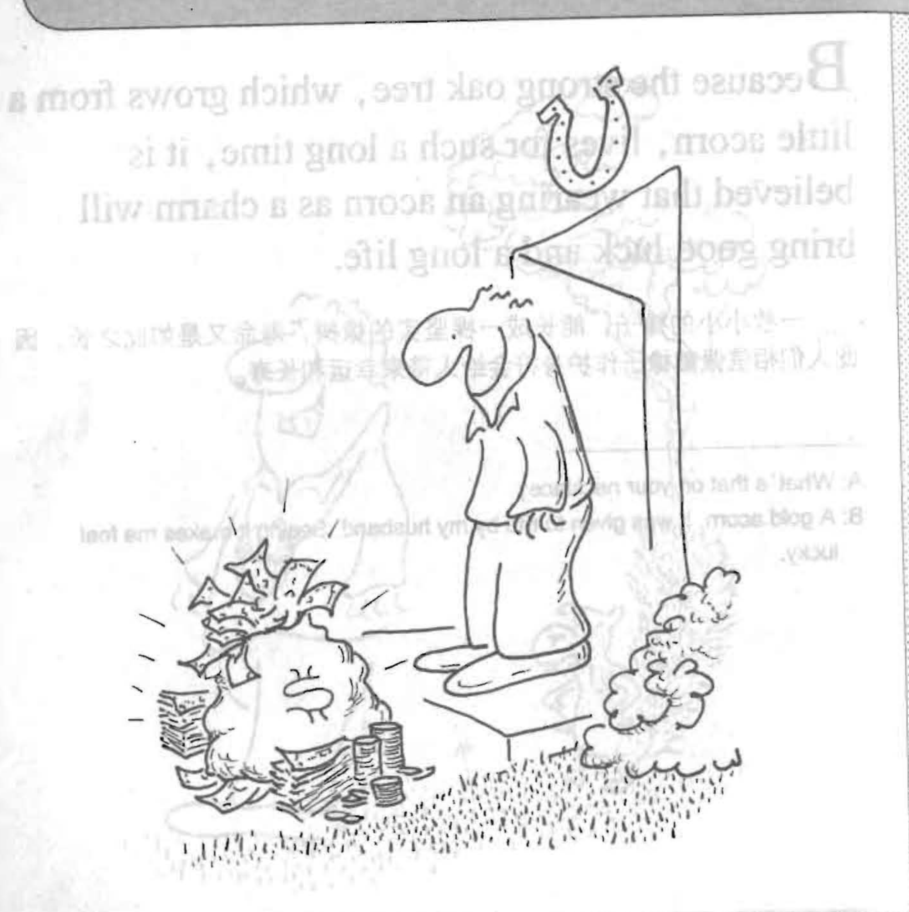
Because the strong oak tree, which grows from a little acorn, lives for such a long time, it is believed that wearing an acorn as a charm will bring good luck and a long life.

一枚小小的橡子，能长成一棵坚实的橡树，寿命又是如此之长，因此人们相信佩戴橡子作护身符会给人带来幸运和长寿。

A: What's that on your necklace?

B: A gold acorn. It was given to me by my husband. Seeing it makes me feel lucky.

65 Hanging a horseshoe over the door



门框上方挂马蹄铁

A horseshoe has always been considered a good luck charm. Some say this is because the horseshoe is in the shape of a half moon, a symbol of good fortune. Horseshoes often are hung over the door of a house or barn for protection.

马蹄铁一直被视作一种吉祥物。有人说这是因为马蹄铁呈半月形，而半月是幸运的象征。人们通常把马蹄铁悬挂在房门或谷仓门的上方，以求保护。

A: How do you like our new house? We'll be moving in next week.
B: It needs just one more thing for the finishing touch. I brought you this horseshoe to hang over the door.
A: Thank you for the good wish.

66 Carrying a rabbit's foot



随身携带兔子脚

One of the most common good luck charms is a rabbit's foot. It is considered lucky because rabbbits have many offspring, and having many children is a sign of wealth.

兔子脚是最常见的吉祥物之一，因为兔子能繁衍很多后代，而子女众多也是财富的象征。

A: Are you ready for the big test in math today?
B: Yes. I didn't study much, but I've got my rabbit's foot right here.
A: To speak the truth, I don't think it will help much.

67 Saying "Break a leg" to an actor



祝演员"摔断腿"

Sometimes we must try to trick any evil spirits that might be listening. Wishing an actor "good luck" before he goes onstage is believed to be an invitation for bad things to happen. Instead, a person should tell the actor to "break a leg" because by wishing for a bad thing, good luck will come.

有时魔鬼会偷听我们的谈话，因此我们要想方设法迷惑他们。据说在演员上台前祝他"好运"会招致坏的事情发生。相反，应该祝他"摔断腿"，因为当你企求坏的事情时，好运就会降临。

A: I've never had such a big part in a play before. Wish me luck.

B: Go out there and break a leg!

68 Wearing a ring in one's ear



戴耳环

According to tradition, rings have many magical powers. Making a hole through the earlobe was a way to let out harmful spirits that might have entered the body. Putting a ring through the hole would bring good luck and a long life.

根据传统观念，耳环有很多不可思议的魔力，在耳垂上穿个洞会把那些可能已进入身体中的恶灵释放出去。把耳环穿过这个洞会给人带来幸运和长寿。

A: Phil must be the luckiest guy in the world.

B: Why do you think so?

A: He's got three holes in each ear and a ring in every one.

B: Well, it seems he wants to be lucky at least.

69 Picking up a pin



捡到针

Pins are considered magical because they are made from shiny metal. Superstition says it is lucky to find a pin on the floor and pick it up.

See a pin, pick it up.
All the day you'll have good luck.

人们认为针具有魔力，因为它是由闪亮的金属制成的。迷信认为发现地上有针并捡起来会给人带来好运。

看见针，就要捡，
好运气一整天。

Lisa was excited about the new dress her mother was making for her birthday. She wished the day would be perfect when she picked up four pins from the sewing room floor. And in fact, when she got home, her parents gave her a fantastic birthday present—a ticket and some spending money for a vacation in Europe.

70 Knocking on wood



敲木头

People once believed that the spirits of the gods lived in trees. So when we talk of our good fortune, we knock on wood three times to ask the spirit inside the wood to protect our luck and not to punish us for praising ourselves.

从前人们相信神灵居住在树里。因此，我们谈论自己的福气时，要在木头上敲三下，请求里面的神灵保护我们的好运，并且不要因为我们自夸而惩罚我们。

A: I've been sick all winter.

B: Not me, knock on wood (playfully). My whole family has stayed healthy this year.

71 Making a circle with the thumb and forefinger



拇指食指环个圈

A good luck sign may be made by bringing the thumb and forefinger together to form a circle. Since the circle has no beginning and no end, it is a symbol of luck. Nowadays this sign is often made to show congratulations.

把拇指、食指捏在一起环成个圈，是一种表示好运的手势，由于圆圈既无起点也无终点，因此是运气的象征。现在，人们常常用这个手势向他人表示祝贺。

A: So did you get the promotion, or didn't you?

B: I sure did!

C: Congratulations! Let's go out and celebrate with dinner and champagne. It's on me!

Section Seven

Win or Lose

第七篇　事关胜负





72 Changing your luck at cards



牌桌上时来运转

A player may change bad luck to good by playing with a new deck of cards.

打牌者若想摆脱坏运气，时来运转，可以换一副新扑克牌继续打。

A: No more! I've lost all five games.

B: Come on! Play just one more. I'll get the new deck of cards. Hopefully, that can cheer you up.

73 Playing cards on a shiny table



光亮的牌桌

Cards should never be played on a shiny table. For best luck the table should be covered with a green cloth.

绝不能在光亮的桌上玩牌。为图吉利，应该在桌上铺一张绿色台布。

A: This green tablecloth should make my wife happy.
B: Why? Is green her favorite color?
A: No. The game is at our house tonight, and she's been losing lately. Maybe this will change her luck. At least, it's my good will.

74 Beginner's luck



新手运气旺

According to a common superstition, first-time gamblers always win because of "beginner's luck."

一种普遍的迷信观念认为，第一次赌钱的人总会赢，因为 "新手运气旺"。

A: I'm not playing cards tonight.

B: Why not? What's the matter?

A: This is Lee's first time to play, and I don't have money to lose.

B: Don't worry. Experience and skills count more on the table-board.

75 Crossing your legs while playing



打牌跷二郎腿

A card player must never sit at the table with his legs crossed. He might "cross out" his good luck.

打牌的人坐在桌前时切不可跷二郎腿，他可能会因此"撬"走好运。

A: Why are you standing up? Sit down and play cards.

B: I forget and cross my legs when I sit still. My luck is so bad that I've got to stand up to try to change it.

A: The only way your luck will change is if you stop playing.

76 Looking over a player's shoulder



看别人打牌

If you look over someone's shoulder while they are playing cards, you will bring that player bad luck.

如果你在某人身后看他打牌，你就会给这个人带来坏运气。

A: Go away and stop looking over my shoulder!

B: I was just trying to see how well you were playing.

A: Well, you're bringing me bad luck. I've lost the last three hands.

B: All right. I'll go. But the way you're playing, I'd be surprised if your luck ever changed at all.

77 Playing for money on a certain day



星期五玩牌

Superstition says that playing cards before 6:00 p.m. on Friday will bring misfortune.

迷信观念认为星期五下午 6 点前玩扑克牌会给人带来不幸。

A: 5...4...3...2...1. It's 6:00. Let's play cards!

B: I'm afraid that still won't stop you from losing, Tom.

78 Borrowed money cannot lose



借钱者不输

Gamblers who play with borrowed money are blessed. Because of this belief no gambler will give money to another gambler when they are playing in the same game or betting on the same thing.

据说，用借来的钱赌博的人是受到保佑的。因此，同桌玩牌或就同样的东西打赌时，任何赌博者都不会借钱给其他赌徒。

A: Charles, can you lend me some money for tonight's game?

B: No way. You always lose. And I don't believe in the nonsense that borrowed money cannot lose.

79 Losing one's temper while playing



打牌时发火

Players believe that if they become angry while playing, they will lose the game.

打牌的人认为，如果在牌桌上生气，就必定会输牌。

Stephanie knew Janet would lose when she saw Janet throw her ball at the referee. Janet would never win when she got that angry.

80 Whistling at the card table



牌桌上吹口哨

Bad luck and whistling have always been connected. One superstition says that if you whistle or sing while playing cards, you will lose.

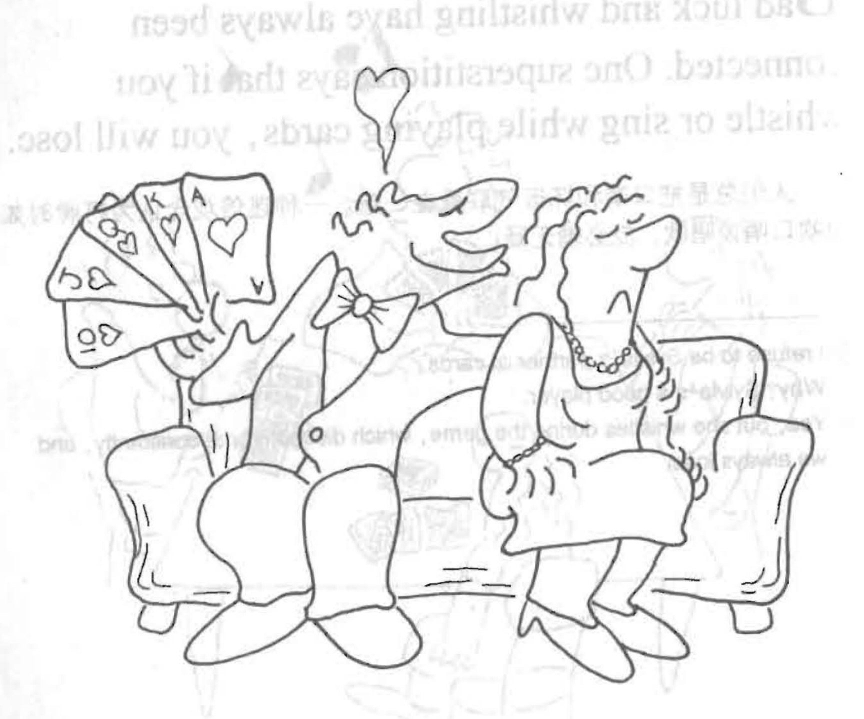
人们总是把口哨和坏运气联系在一起。一种迷信观念认为打牌时如果吹口哨或唱歌，就必输无疑。

A: I refuse to be Sylvia's partner at cards.

B: Why? Sylvia's a good player.

A: Yes, but she whistles during the game, which distracted me constantly, and we always lose.

81 Lucky at cards, unlucky at love



打牌走运，爱情不顺

According to tradition, a person cannot be lucky at everything. If he is lucky at cards, he will be unlucky at love.

根据传统观念，一个人不可能事事走运，如果在牌桌上运气好，在爱情上就会不幸。

A: Beth and Mario are the worst card players I've ever seen.

B: Yes, but they've been married for fifteen years. They're certainly lucky in love.

A: Love is nothing to do with card, I believe.

Section Eight

Special Days

第八篇　特殊日子

82 Groundhog Day



土拨鼠日

Farmers began the belief that the groundhog predicts the end of winter. On February 2 when the groundhog comes out, if it sees its shadow, there will be six more weeks of winter. If there is no shadow, spring is on the way.

农民认为土拨鼠能预见到冬天的结束。2 月 2 日，土拨鼠钻出地面，如果它能看见自己的影子，冬天就会再持续 6 周；如果它没有看到影子，则预示着春天即将到来。

A: This cold weather is making me sick. I'm glad it will end soon.

B: How do you know about the weather? Can you tell the future?

A: No, but the groundhog can, and he has yet to see his shadow. Maybe the farmers' saying is right.

83 April Fool's Day



愚人节

The first day of April is traditionally a day for playing jokes. Superstition says that a man who marries on April Fool's Day will be ruled by his wife.

4月的第一天传统上是互相开玩笑的节日。迷信观念认为，在愚人节结婚的男人会受老婆的支配。

A: I was hoping you could give me a ride to school this morning, but I see you've got a flat tire.

B: How can that be? The tires were fine last night.

A: April fool! There's nothing wrong with your car.

84 Leap year



闰年

Leap year is the year when February has 29 days; this year is believed to be a lucky time to begin new projects. A common tradition says that during this year a woman can propose marriage, and it's bad luck for a man to turn down such an offer.

2 月有 29 天的年份是闰年。据说在这一年开创新的事业是非常吉利的。另外，传统上普遍认为，在闰年里女人可以向男人求婚，而男人如果拒绝女人，则对他是不吉利的。

A: This year I'm opening my new store, and I'm sure I'll make lots of money.

B: Yes, and this year I'm asking John to marry me. It's leap year. He can't refuse! I wish tradition told the truth.

85 Halloween



万圣节前夕

Halloween is celebrated on the night of October 31. On that night ghosts and witches walk the earth. But because the spirits cannot be seen, children dressed in costumes and carrying pumpkins may do the spirits' "tricks" for them. To protect their homes, neighbors must give the children "treats" of cookies or candy.

10 月 31 日夜晚是万圣节前夕。这天晚上鬼怪巫师都来到地面上。但是由于人们看不见他们，所以穿着古怪衣服、拿着南瓜的孩子会替鬼怪们搞"恶作剧"。为保护自己的家，邻居们必须"请客"，送给孩子们饼干或糖果。

A: Trick or treat!

B: Oh, what scary costumes! Please take lots of candy, and don't play any tricks on me.

86 New Year's Day



元旦

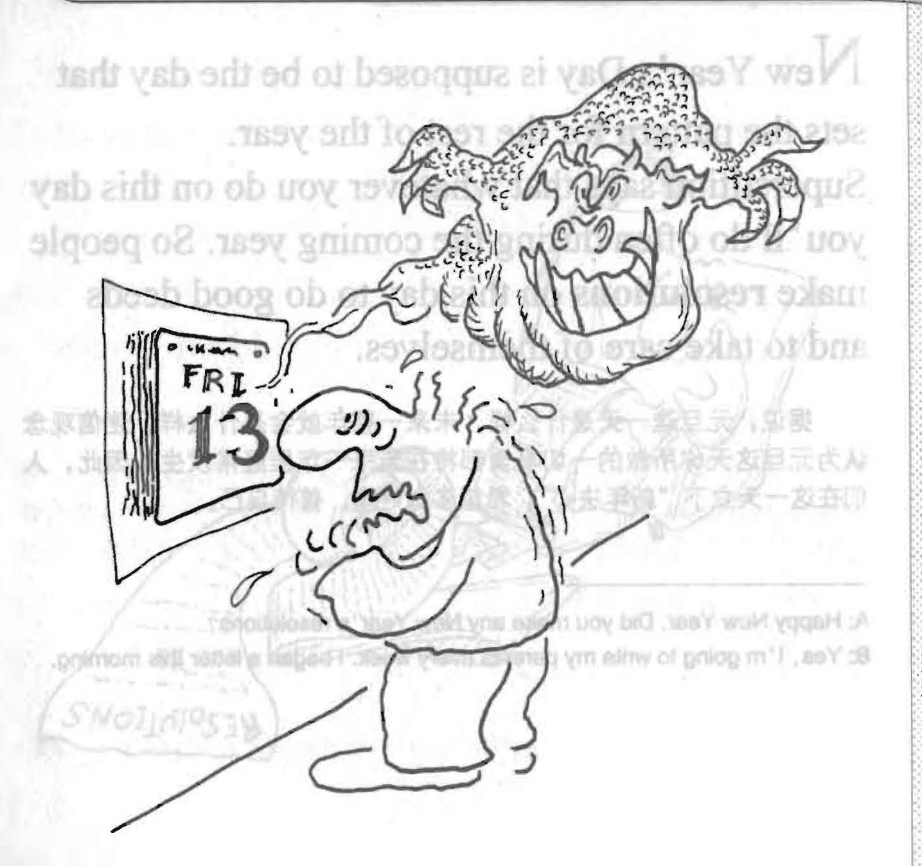
New Year's Day is supposed to be the day that sets the pattern for the rest of the year. Superstition says that whatever you do on this day you'll do often during the coming year. So people make **resolutions** on this day to do good deeds and to take care of themselves.

据说，元旦这一天是什么样，未来一整年就会是什么样。迷信观念认为元旦这天你所做的一切事情都将在未来一年里经常发生。因此，人们在这一天立下“新年决心”，希望多做好事、善待自己。

A: Happy New Year. Did you make any New Year's resolutions?

B: Yes, I'm going to write my parents every week. I began a letter this morning.

87 Friday the thirteenth



13号，周五

It is believed that the combination of Friday, an unlucky day, and thirteen, an unlucky number, will bring great misfortune.

周五这一天不吉利，而数字 13 也不吉利，因此人们相信周五和 13 号碰在一起会带来极大的不幸。

A: Why are you so late? If we don't go soon, we'll miss our plane.

B: I don't like to tell you this, but we can't leave on our trip today.

A: Why not?

B: I went to pay for the tickets and my wallet was gone. All our money for the trip is lost.

A: I should have known something would happen. Never begin a trip on Friday the thirteenth.

B: Don't be silly. We should call the police right now.

88 Valentine's Day



情人节

On February 14 it is the custom for lovers to give each other cards and gifts. Superstition says that the person who kisses you on Valentine's Day will be your lover for the whole year.

2月14日这一天，根据习俗，情人间互赠卡片和礼物。迷信观念认为，在情人节这天吻你的人将会是你未来一年中的情人。

A: Today's the day. I'm giving Beth this card and telling her how I feel.
B: If you can get a kiss, she'll be yours forever.

89 Christmas



圣诞节

Santa Claus, gifts, family dinners, and music are American Christmas traditions. Another custom is that to have good luck in the coming year, the first person to enter the house on Christmas morning should be a male.

圣诞老人、圣诞礼物、家庭聚餐、圣诞音乐， 这些都是美国圣诞节传统的组成部分。还有一种习俗是: 为了在未来一年里拥有好运，圣诞节早晨第一个走进房门的应该是位男性。

Each year when the family came to our house for Christmas dinner, everyone stopped at the door. Granddad always came inside first, calling "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year."

90 Easter



复活节

The egg is a symbol of the beginning of spring and is the most common tradition of Easter. Children color eggs and hunt for eggs hidden by the Easter Bunny. The celebration invites good fortune in the coming months.

鸡蛋是春天开始的象征，也是复活节的一大传统内容。复活节这一天，孩子们绘制彩蛋，并寻找复活节小兔藏起来的彩蛋。这种庆祝活动会给未来几个月带来好运。

A: How many eggs did the Easter Bunny leave at your house?
B: I found ten; they were blue and yellow and pink and green.

Section Nine

And Many More

第九篇　其他

91 Setting a hat on a bed



帽子放床上

Long ago people believed that evil spirits lived in the hair. Placing a hat on a bed would bring bad luck or cause an argument in the household.

很久以前，人们认为魔鬼住在头发里。把帽子放在床上会招来厄运或引起家庭争吵。

A: Come in. I'm glad you could make it. I'll put your hat and coat here on the bed.

B: Oh, please don't put my hat there. I don't want to be the cause of bad luck for you and your new baby.

A: Oh, don't be silly. I never belive that.

92 Placing a tooth under the pillow



牙藏枕头下

When a child loses a tooth, it is tradition for the child to place the tooth under his pillow when he goes to sleep. The **tooth fairy** will come during the night and leave a gift of money.

根据传统习俗，孩子每掉一颗牙，都应该在睡觉前把那颗牙压在枕头下。“牙仙女”会在夜里把牙取走，并留下一些钱给孩子作礼物。

A: Mommy, look! My tooth came out!

B: It sure did! Do you remember what to do with it?

A: Yes, I put it under my pillow and then get money for more candy so more teeth will come out.

93 Moving into a new home



乔迁新居

To stop evil spirits from entering a new home, you should give the family a gift of salt, bread, and water. This custom comes from the times when wandering peoples used charms and spells for protection.

拜访刚刚搬入新居的人家时，应该送上盐、面包和水作礼物，这样做是为了防止魔鬼进入新居。这一习俗起源于旧时流浪民族用护身符和符咒保护自己。

A: Welcome to the new house. Sorry we have no food to offer you.

B: That's OK. We brought bread, water, and salt for good luck and wine to celebrate.

94 Throwing a coin into a fountain



往喷泉里投硬币

In the old days people would throw coins into a well as a gift to the sea gods, asking them not to cause the wells to dry up. Nowadays, the tradition is that if a person throws a coin into a well or fountain while making a wish, the sea gods will make the wish come true.

从前，人们向井里扔硬币奉献给海神，祈求海神不要让井水干涸。今天的习俗是在许愿的同时往井里或喷泉里投一枚硬币，海神就会让你的愿望实现。

A: I give up.

B: What's wrong?

A: Every day for a year I've walked by this fountain, made my wish, and thrown in a penny. But I'm still driving the same old car.

B: Be pratical. You have to earn your own fortune.

95 Crossing a knife and fork

刀叉成十字

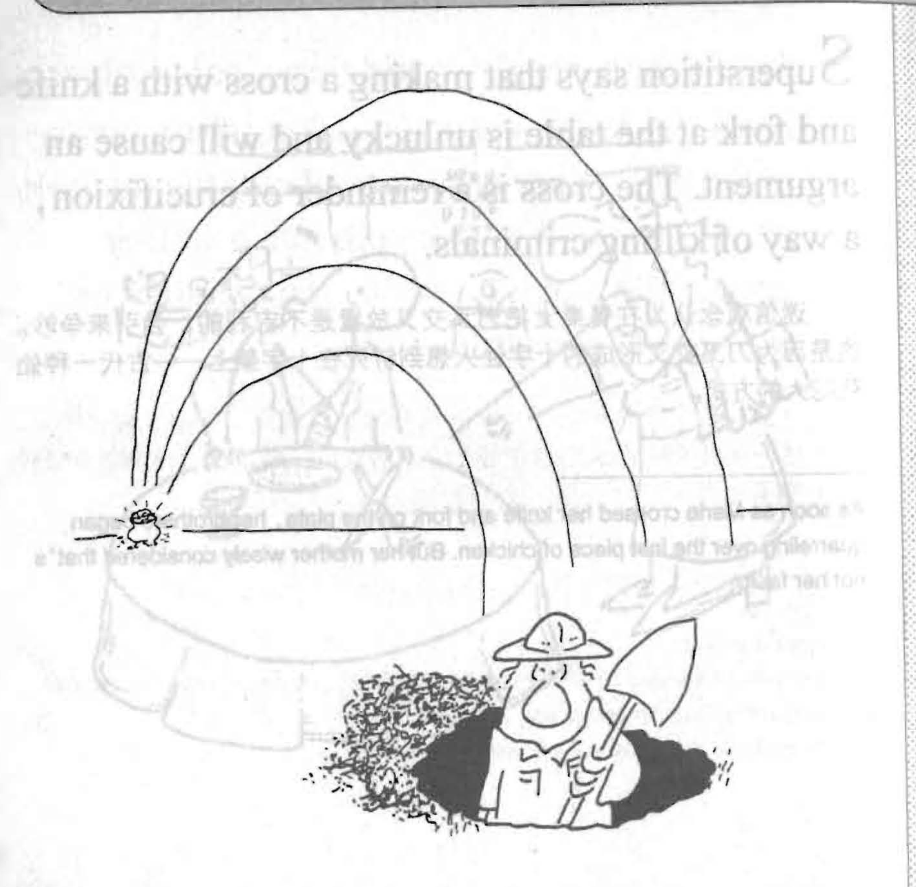
Superstition says that making a cross with a knife and fork at the table is unlucky and will cause an argument. The cross is a reminder of crucifixion, a way of killing criminals.

迷信观念认为在餐桌上把刀叉交叉放置是不吉利的，会引来争吵。这是因为刀叉交叉形成的十字让人想到钉死在十字架上——古代一种处死犯人的方式。

As soon as Marie crossed her knife and fork on the plate, her brothers began quarreling over the last piece of chicken. But her mother wisely considered that's not her fault.



96 Digging at the end of a rainbow



彩虹尽头挖金子

Many think that the rainbow is a symbol of good fortune because it connects heaven and earth. A common belief is that a person can find a pot of gold by digging at the end of the rainbow.

很多人认为彩虹是福运的象征，因为它连接起天与地。据说如果在彩虹尽头处向地底下挖，就会找到一罐金子。

A: That's so beautiful. I love rainbows.

B: Me too. What's even nicer is the pot of gold at the end of each one.

A: If only that were true. I've got a wedding coming up, and I could sure use the money.

97 Looking at a full moon



注视满月

It was once believed that those who looked at the full moon too long risked going mad. Nowadays, people simply believe that there is more quarreling and that strange things happen during a full moon.

从前，有人认为，注视满月时间太久会让人发疯。如今，人们只是认为，在满月时更容易发生争吵，还会有奇怪的事情发生。

A: I don't want to go to work tonight.

B: Why not?

A: Because every time there's a full moon strange things happen in the store. Last month a woman who said she was a witch broke three eggs on the floor to scare away evil spirits.

B: Take it easy. She was just joking.

98 Wishing on a star







对星许愿

Shooting stars are considered to be signs of good fortune. Many people believe that their secret wish will come true if they make it when they see the first star at night.

流星被认为是吉祥的征兆。许多人相信， 如果你在看到夜晚第一颗流星时暗暗许一个愿，你的愿望就会实现。

A: Look, it's the first star. Make a wish.

B: I wish for...

C: Don't tell! Only secret wishes come true, as tradition says.

99 Bird flying into a house



鸟飞进屋里

A bird flying into the house was considered a sign of death. Birds were thought to represent souls of the dead, and when a bird flew into a house, it was believed to be looking for another soul to join it.

过去，鸟飞进屋里被视作死亡的征兆。据说鸟代表死人的灵魂，因而人们认为鸟飞进屋里意味着它要再找一个灵魂与它作伴。

Jill had always been afraid of birds. She believed it was because of her grandmother's stories about birds flying into the house on the day Jill's grandfather died.

100 Toasting when drinking



干杯

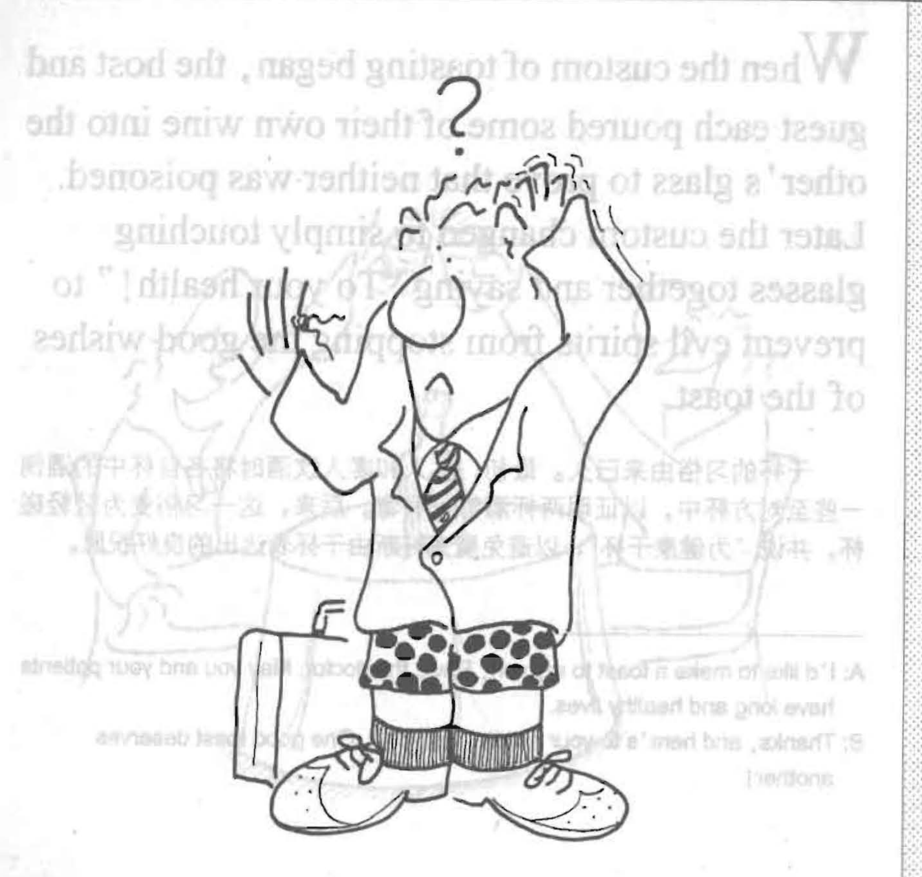
When the custom of toasting began, the host and guest each poured some of their own wine into the other's glass to prove that neither was poisoned. Later the custom changed to simply touching glasses together and saying "To your health!" to prevent evil spirits from stopping the good wishes of the toast.

干杯的习俗由来已久。最初，主人和客人饮酒时将各自杯中的酒倒一些至对方杯中，以证明两杯酒都没有毒。后来，这一习俗变为轻轻碰杯，并说"为健康干杯"，以避免魔鬼打断由干杯表达出的良好祝愿。

A: I'd like to make a toast to my son, Paul, the doctor. May you and your patients have long and healthy lives.

B: Thanks, and here's to your health, too, Dad. One good toast deserves another!

101 Tying a string around a finger



手指上缠绳

In the old days it was believed that tying a piece of string or cloth around the place of a body pain would remind the person of where that pain had been. Now, we tie a string around our finger to remember something we must do.

过去，人们认为在身体疼痛的部位上缠一根绳子或布条会提醒那个人疼痛曾在的位置。如今，我们在手指上缠绳是为了记住某件必须要做的事。

A: You need to buy bread and milk on your way home.

B: I'll tie a string around my finger to remind me.

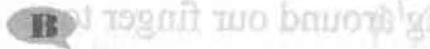
A: And by the way, don't forget to stop at the pet food store for dog food.

B: Boy, at this rate, I'm going to run out of [*use up*] string.

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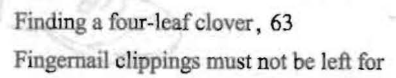
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